

Job the Unfinalizable

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Job the Unfinalizable

A Bakhtinian Reading of Job 1–11

By

Seong Whan Timothy Hyun



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Tacoma, Washington

יהוה נתן... יהי שם יהוה מברך
Seong Whan Timothy Hyun

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Reading the book of *Job*¹ can feel like hard work. When reading, readers typically desire to *finalize* what they read, as Mikhail Bakhtin puts it. Readers approach *Job* with a certain communicative expectation. However, *Job* seems to be able to dodge readers' attempts to grasp what *Job* is communicating to them in any final way. As Carol Newsom states, "... the book's overall meaning has ... perplexing interpretive problems for readers."² *Job* has offered so many exegetical and interpretive problems in the history of interpretation³ that, instead of being finalized and providing answers to readers' questions in their readings of *Job*, *Job* seems to continue to offer questions and problems and to remain *unfinalized*.

There are several underlying reasons that make *Job* one of the most difficult books to read/finalize. First, *Job*'s overall structure introduces problems. *Job* seems to combine two very different genres: a prose tale and a poem. *Job* starts and ends with prose—the prologue and the epilogue—and has a poem—the dialogue—as its middle part. This structure of the book causes readers confusion as to how to read the book as a whole. Second, readers face difficulty making sense of the different characterizations of Job between the prose and the poem. In the prose tale, Job is read as a patient, faithful, perfect man, but in the poem, he is perceived as an impatient, complaining and hostile man.⁴ Thirdly, Job poses considerable problems in resolving its syntactical and grammatical elements and uses unusual vocabulary and verbal juxtapositions, continually raising questions

¹ To prevent confusion in reading between *the book* of Job and *Job the character*, I will *italicize* the word 'Job' whenever it refers to *the book* of Job. The reason that I distinguish *the book* of Job from *Job the character* is to help readers see the differences between Job's voice and the voice of *Job*.

² Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Alison Lo (*Job 28 as Rhetoric: An Analysis of Job 28 in the Context of Job 22–31* [Leiden: Brill, 2003], 4) suggests that the different portrayals of Job, as a patient man in the prologue, and as an impatient man in the poetic section, indicate that Job lost his patience because of his lack of wisdom.

as to what is creative reuse of language in poetry and what represents corruption of the text in the process of transmission.

In the history of interpretation, various interpretative strategies and methodologies have been used to resolve the problematic elements that complicate *Job*, making it difficult to finalize the book. Despite many attempts, the perplexing nature of *Job* has meant that there is no consensus among scholars as to its meaning, and many readers admit their own inability to finalize their reading. I believe the reason lies not in the various strategies and methodologies but in the readers' presuppositions.

The interpretative strategies and methodologies adopted in reading *Job* generally presuppose that the quest should be to find a single truth from a single consciousness. As Newsom states:

Such monologic conceptions of author, text and truth have governed both historical-critical study of *Job* and most literary and theological studies as well. For historical criticism, it was precisely the perception that the book of *Job* lacked such monologic unity that led to the critical judgment that the prose tale and the *Job* poem must come from different authors. As the statement of Pope, quoted earlier, insists, the book of *Job* could not be understood as the product of a single consciousness. In response, the arguments of literary-critical and theological interpreters have been that the book of *Job*, although containing "dissonance and tension," can indeed be understood, in the words of Francis Andersen, as the "product of a single mind." For both positions, the assumptions of monologic truth are exhibited in the governing image of the "single mind."⁵

Since such readers approach *Job* with a monologic concept of truth, they are perplexed in their reading of *Job* due to the variety of structures, theological tones, points of view, and worldviews in *Job*. As long as they read *Job* with a monologic concept of truth, readers will always find themselves confounded by the various interpretative problems. Thus, this book suggests an alternative way, and concept of truth, with which to read *Job*.

Newsom in her reading of the book of *Job*⁶ introduces Bakhtin and his idea of dialogism as an alternative way to read *Job*. In this book I concur with Newsom in adopting Bakhtin's dialogism as a way to respond adequately to *Job*'s several different genres, voices in dialogues and worldviews.⁷

⁵ Newsom, *Book of Job*, 22.

⁶ Idem.

⁷ I will discuss further why Bakhtin's dialogism is a suitable tool for reading *Job* below.

Bakhtin's Dialogism

Bakhtin and his literary theory dialogism have been introduced into biblical scholarship through his own works,⁸ by Bakhtinian scholars who form a Bakhtinian circle and work with Bakhtinian ideas,⁹ and by biblical scholars.¹⁰ In her book,¹¹ Newsom particularly explains in depth

⁸ Major selected works are Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans., Caryl Emerson; Theory and History of Literature 8 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968; repr., Bloomington; Indiana University Press, 1984); Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, ed. Michael T. Holquist and trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael T. Holquist, University of Texas Press Slavic Series 1 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist and trans. Vern W. McGee, University of Texas Slavic Series 8 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov and trans. Vadim Liapunov, University of Texas Press Slavic Series 9 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); and Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Art*, ed. Vadim Liapunov and Michael Holquist and trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993).

⁹ Major selected works are V.N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); Pam Morris, ed., *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, and Voloshinov* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Simon Dentith, ed., *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introduction Reader*, Critical readers in Theory and Practice Series (London: Routledge, 1995); Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich, Theory and History of Literature Series 13 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); and Ruth Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, Cambridge Studies in Russian Literature Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

¹⁰ Major selected works are Robert Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History. Part 1: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges* (New York: Seabury, 1980); Polzin, *Samuel and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History. Part 2: 1 Samuel* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989); Polzin, *David and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History. Part 3: 2 Samuel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993); Kenneth M. Craig, Jr., *Reading Esther: A Case for the Literary Carnavalesque* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995); Barbara Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship: An Introduction*, SemeiaSt 38 (Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); Green, *How the Mighty are Fallen: A Dialogical Study of King Saul in 1 Samuel*, JSOTSup 365 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Walter L. Reed, *Dialogues of the Word: the Bible as Literature according to Bakhtin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Michael E. Vines, *The Problem of Markan Genre: The Gospel of Mark and the Jewish Novel*, *Academia biblica* 3 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002); Carleen R. Mandolfo, *God in the Dock: Dialogic Tension in the Psalms of Lament*, JSOTSup 357 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); Mandolfo, *Daughter Zion Talks Back to the Prophets: A Dialogic Theology of the Book of Lamentations*, SemeiaSt 58 (Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); Roland Boer, ed., *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies*, SemeiaSt 63 (Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); David M. Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions: A Satirical Reading of Daniel 1–6*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 12 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008); and Geoff Webb, *Mark at the Threshold: Applying Bakhtinian Categories to Markan Characterisation*, Biblical Interpretation Series 95 (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

¹¹ Newsom, *Book of Job*, 21–31.

the meaning of a polyphonic text in Bakhtin's dialogism and how this relates to the dialogic and polyphonic nature of *Job*. I will draw on her explanation as I briefly outline the aspects of Bakhtin's dialogism, although there are points which I will suggest need to be examined further.

Bakhtin was a Russian philosopher, literary critic and literary theorist who lived between 1895 and 1975. He introduced the theory of dialogism. Dialogism sees in any literary text "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses."¹² Dialogism perceives various different voices in a literary text rather than one dominant and authoritative voice. Dialogism does not "suppose the simple existence of two physical bodies, those of the sender and the receiver"¹³ but may identify several different independent voices at work in the text.¹⁴ Indeed, a single word or utterance in a text may belong to several independent voices. Such a word or utterance is identified as 'polyphonic.'

How can a single word or utterance be polyphonic? Bakhtin clearly explains,

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own.¹⁵

Any speaker's utterance of a word is actually an adaptation of a word that has been used by others. The word has always already existed in someone else's voice. Thus, when a speaker uses a word, the word involves someone else's voice, making it possible for us to discover and hear different voices in the word.

The polyphonic nature of a word represents characters in a literary text/work not as objects who are manipulated and described by the narrator but

¹² Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 6.

¹³ Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 39–40.

¹⁴ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 293.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

as subjects on an equal footing with the narrator (their voices are constructed in exactly the same way as this figure's voice), whose own word about themselves and each other is all that we know about them.¹⁶

Thus, Bakhtin's dialogic understanding of a word, utterance or voice suggests that readers may need to read characters' voices in *Job* as equally weighted with the narrator's, rather than seeking some overall narratorial voice to unify its meaning.

Also, the dialogic nature of a word or utterance in language induces us to see the dialogic sense of truth¹⁷ in language. The dialogic sense of truth suggests that any search for a unified truth needs to acknowledge that such a unified truth cannot be produced by a single consciousness or voice but requires a plurality of consciousnesses or voices, since, according to Bakhtin, "it is quite possible to imagine and postulate a unified truth that requires a plurality of consciousnesses."¹⁸

This concept of plural consciousnesses or voices has revolutionized the position of the author or the implied author in literary works. The author's or the implied author's position is neither privileged nor advantaged.¹⁹ According to dialogism, the one who makes sense of truth and meaning is not only the author or the implied author but also others' voices such as the voice of a text, characters' voices and readers' voices.²⁰ In a literary work, all voices can be equally weighted according to Bakhtin's dialogism. The perception of the equal weighting of voices in literary works may apply to the relationship between the narrator's voice and other characters' voices in narrative.²¹

Since a plurality of consciousnesses or voices is required according to the dialogic sense of truth and meaning, a word is always open and, to use a Bakhtinian term, has "unfinalizability."²² According to Bakhtin, "nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future, and will always be in the future."²³

¹⁶ Sue Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 114.

¹⁷ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 21.

¹⁸ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 81.

¹⁹ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 21.

²⁰ Readers could include the historical readers, first readers, implied readers and contemporary readers. However, this book considers contemporary readers more than other readers.

²¹ The point will be used later to indicate how my position differs from Newsom.

²² Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 23.

²³ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 166.

How does a plurality of consciousnesses cause a word or an utterance to be open-ended or have unfinalizability?

According to Bakhtin, an utterance or speaking a word

is a link in the chain of speech communication and it cannot be broken off from the preceding links... From the very beginning, the speaker expects a response... an active responsive understanding. The entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response.²⁴

So, all utterances or words in a speaker's mouth expect responses from others who actively participate and interact with a speaker to produce meanings. As in a chain reaction, utterances or words invite a new utterance or word in the others' responses, and in turn this new utterance or word expects and invites responses from others. In a dialogic interaction with others' responsive voices, the newly formed utterance or word will produce another utterance or word. As a result of this chain reaction, in the sense of a plurality of consciousnesses or voices, there is no ultimate word to determine the world. All utterances or words are always unfinalized.

Bakhtin's insight into the dialogic nature of a word or utterance, that is, the plurality of consciousnesses or voices in producing meaning and truth, and the unfinalizability of a word or utterance together offer a new way to perceive characters in any literary text. An essential part of this new approach is encapsulated in Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope. The implications of this concept for the understanding of the communicative purpose of *Job* will be explored in this book. This is a dimension of Bakhtin's thought which has previously not been brought to bear in a systematic way on the issues raised in *Job*. The aim of this book is to show that this concept provides a new way to understand the interactions not only between the characters but also between the genres in the book of *Job*.

Chronotope

'Chronotope' is a term unique to Bakhtin which, literally, means 'time space.' Bakhtin creates the term by borrowing the idea of time and space, introduced as part of Einstein's Theory of Relativity, as a metaphor within

²⁴ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 94.

literary criticism.²⁵ Bakhtin defines chronotope as “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” and understands chronotope “as a formally constitutive category of literature.”²⁶ According to Bakhtin, chronotope “is a basic unit of literary analysis.”²⁷ Also, according to Bakhtin,

Without such temporal-spatial expression, even abstract thought is impossible. Consequently, every entry into the sphere of meanings is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope,²⁸

for a chronotope is the “organizing center for the fundamental narrative events of the novel,” “is the place where the knots of the narrative are tied and untied,” and it “can be said without qualification that to them [time and space] belongs the meaning that shapes the narrative.”²⁹

Put simply, Bakhtin elucidates chronotope as the intrinsic connectedness between time and space that assimilates real historical time and space in literature.³⁰ Since Bakhtin perceives and introduces the concept of the chronotope as the assimilation of real historical time and space in literature, he does not ignore the important relationship between a literary text and its social and political context or unique historical condition.³¹ Bakhtin’s idea of the significance of the unique historical condition or social and political context of a literary text induces him to consider the particular way in which time and space intersect in a text, since time and space in a text are differently represented and intersected by a different historical, social and political context. By considering the particular way in which a chronotope is formed in a text, Bakhtin introduces the idea that there are varieties of chronotope, since

the particular way in which these [temporal and spatial] indicators intersect in a text is what constitutes its characteristic chronotopes, which are also affected by historical factors such as attitudes to nature, geographical knowledge, and conceptions of the human subject’s interior life.³²

As examples, Bakhtin presents the development of various types of novel in ancient times, in his article, “Forms of Time and Chronotope in the

²⁵ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 84.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Webb, *Mark at the Threshold*, 16.

²⁸ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 258.

²⁹ Ibid., 250.

³⁰ Ibid., 84–85.

³¹ Ibid., 84–85; Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 201.

³² Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 201.

Novel.”³³ Bakhtin introduces three different types of ancient novel: “adventure novel of ordeal,” “adventure novel of everyday life” and “biographical novel.” In these different novel types, Bakhtin discovers how time is used to deliver stories.

In the first type of ancient novel, the “adventure novel of ordeal,” Bakhtin observes two different times. The one is a hero’s or heroine’s biographical time, which is his or her real-life sequences. The other is “adventure time” in between two adjacent moments of a hero’s or a heroine’s real-life sequence.³⁴ The novel does not actually indicate any changes in a hero’s or a heroine’s life, feeling, worldview or age. Instead, the plot develops by using such temporal indicators as “suddenly,” “at just that moment,” “unexpectedly” and “as soon as,” indicating the intrusion of events into an otherwise stable time and space.³⁵

The second type of ancient novel is the “adventure novel of everyday life.” In this kind of novel, Bakhtin notices the mix of adventure-time and everyday time. This type of novel is interested in telling the course of the heroes’ life, as it is “its critical moments that make up the plot of the novel.”³⁶ The critical moments in a heroes’ life are presented as their metamorphoses in exceptional and unusual moments. Heroes’ metamorphoses indicate the change or transformation in heroes’ lives, appearances and worldviews.³⁷

The last type of ancient novel is the “biographical novel.”³⁸ This kind of novel uses real-life time and space (chronotope) and is interested in showing a heroes’ self-consciousness.³⁹ Since a heroes’ self-consciousness becomes exclusively publicized,⁴⁰ such novels could be described as “forms for depicting the *public self-consciousness of a man*.”⁴¹ In this type of novel, Bakhtin explains,

Character itself does not grow, does not change, it is merely *filled in*: at the beginning it is incomplete, imperfectly disclosed, fragmentary; it becomes *full* and well rounded only at the end. Consequently, the process of disclosing character does not lead to a real change or ‘becoming’ in historical

³³ The article is included in Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 84–258.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 89–90.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 92–93.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 115–16.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 130.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 140. The emphasis is original.

reality, but rather solely to a fulfillment, that is, to a filling-in of that form sketched at the very outset.⁴²

Having said this, Bakhtin points out that this type of novel presents a character by selecting his or her various features and qualities from “various happenings and events that occur *at different times* in the hero’s [or heroine’s] life.”⁴³

Through his investigation of the different types of ancient novel, Bakhtin clarifies his definition of a chronotope. First, Bakhtin introduces his perception of the connection between chronotope and genre. The various types of ancient novel represent different genres and their genres are characterized by their chronotopes. According to Bakhtin, chronotope determines genre. He states that the chronotope in literature “has an intrinsic generic significance. It can even be said that it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions . . .”⁴⁴ Bakhtin’s understanding of literary genres is one of the unique characteristics of his theory because chronotope decides genres.

Genre in Bakhtinian thought is different from genre as described in form-criticism in biblical studies. Genres in form-criticism are identifiable sub-species of literature. However, for Bakhtin, genres serve as the medium, the means and the frame for communication to express one’s own peculiar view of the world in a particular time and space.⁴⁵ Bakhtin’s idea of genre as the medium, the means and the frame for communication defines genre as “speech type” or “speech genre.”⁴⁶ If genres, as speech types/genres, are the means or frame for the expression of one’s own particular way of viewing the world in a particular time and space, then, according to Bakhtin,

Both the composition and, particularly, the style of the utterance depend on those to whom the utterance is addressed, how the speaker (or writer) senses and imagines his addressees, and the force of their effect on the utterance. Each speech genre in each area of speech communication has its own typical conception of the addressee, and this defines it as a genre.⁴⁷

So, when the time and space in which a speech is formed and the addressees to whom the speech is addressed change to a different time, space and

⁴² Ibid., 141. The emphasis is original.

⁴³ Ibid., 142. The emphasis is original.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 84–85.

⁴⁵ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 78.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 60–70.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 95.

set of addressees, the genres are also changed in order to deliver effectively the speakers' own peculiar perspectives to their addressees in the specific time and space. In this way, genres for Bakhtin are changeable, flexible and plastic in social settings.⁴⁸ Consequently, the Bakhtinian idea of genre as a speech genre makes it plausible for any one text to use various genres as the modes of communication for the transformation of stories, characters and characters' ideologies as a part of the development of the story, characters and characters' different worldviews.

Second, chronotope determines the image of a character or characters in a text. Bakhtin explains that different types of novels—adventure novels of ordeal, adventure novels of everyday life, and biographical novels—represent their heroes or characters in different ways due to their own specific way of utilizing time and space. Having said this, Bakhtin, in particular, clarifies that various chronotopes represent the various images of characters or heroes and the development of their characteristics in diverse and unique ways.⁴⁹ In various chronotopes, characters' ideas, worldviews, feelings or characteristics are transformed or remain unchanged, since chronotope determines the image of a character in a text, as Bakhtin states,

The chronotope as a formally constitutive category determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature as well. The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic.⁵⁰

Third, Bakhtin explores the possibility of mixing several genres or chronotopes to produce a new genre or chronotope in a text. Specifically, Bakhtin highlights this concept in his analysis of an “adventure novel of ordeal” and an “adventure novel of everyday life.” Through his investigation of an “adventure novel of ordeal,” Bakhtin states,

But all these elements, derived from various different genres, are fused and consolidated into a new—specifically novelistic—unity, of which the constitutive feature is adventure-novel-time. The elements derived from various other genres assumed a new character and special functions in this completely new chronotope—“an alien world in adventure-time”—and ceased to be what they had been in other genres.⁵¹

Also, in his scrutiny of an “adventure novel of everyday life,” Bakhtin found that,

⁴⁸ Ibid., 80.

⁴⁹ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 111–29.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 84–85.

⁵¹ Ibid., 89.

... what strikes us first of all is the mix of adventure-time with everyday time. ... Both adventure-and everyday time change their essential forms in this combination, as they are subject to the conditions of the completely new chronotope created by this novel. Thus, there emerges a new type of adventure-time, one sharply distinct from Greek adventure-time, one that is a special sort of everyday time.⁵²

Thus, Bakhtin's two statements clearly demonstrate his understanding of chronotope and genre. Several different genres and chronotopes can be mixed, fused and consolidated to create a new chronotope and genre to present a story, the formation and development of plot, characters and so on.

Thus, this book argues that chronotope is one of the chief categories in Bakhtin's dialogism that can be used to understand *Job* and analyze characters and their polyphonic voices in *Job*, since chronotope assists readers to see that one text strategically includes several genres and chronotopes as modes of communication for the development of plot and characters' ideas, worldviews, appearances and voices. In what way, then, does chronotope specifically play such a critical/significant role in reading *Job*?

First, as we discussed above, any word or utterance includes more than one voice, since a word or utterance is always responsive and also anticipates responses from others. According to Bakhtin, all utterances are dialogic and the existence of an utterance is only possible in a dialogic relationship with other language or utterance, which exists in a historical time and social place. Since any intersubjective relationship is social,⁵³ a word, an utterance, or other unit of language in isolation, "is limited in its ability to realize its fullness of meaning."⁵⁴ Hence, as characters' voices are made up of utterances in *Job*, characters' voices have to be perceived within a historical time and cultural place, embodying the dialogic interaction of characters' voices. For there to be distinguishable voices, they must come from recognizably different places and speak at different times.

Chronotope is an appropriate tool to analyze characters' utterances, which are perceived in a historical time and cultural place, because, according to Bakhtin, chronotope is

⁵² Ibid., 111.

⁵³ Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 30–31.

⁵⁴ Judy Fentress-Williams, "Location, Location, Location: Tamar in the Joseph Cycle," in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies*, ed. Roland Boer (Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 61.

the means of measuring how, in a particular genre or age, “real historical time and space” and “actual historical persons” are articulated, and also how fictional time, space, and character are constructed in relation to one another.⁵⁵

Thus, in *Job*, investigating the chronotope will lead us to clarify how each character is constructed, encounters other characters and creates his or her voice, so that readers may perceive the interaction between the voices.

Second, according to Bakhtin,

Language, as a treasure-house of images, is fundamentally chronotopic. Also chronotopic is the internal form of the word, that is, the mediating marker with those help the root meanings of spatial categories are carried over into temporal relationships (in the broadest sense).⁵⁶

This is how chronotope explains the reason for polyphony in word and language.

In *Job*, individual words in both the prologue and the dialogue may be included in or represent several voices and images due to their dialogic nature. Considering the issues around chronotope assists readers to discover how words that are used in the prologue are reused to reflect different multiple images and meanings in the dialogue.

Third, chronotope defines a specific worldview or point of view, since a particular time and specific space form one's own peculiar view of the world or point of view.⁵⁷ One way in which the text of *Job* gives clues to the variety of chronotopes is by the use of temporal indicators such as “the days” (הַיָּמִים), “the day” (הַיּוֹם) and “days” (יָמִים) and specific places like “before God” (עַל יְהוָה), “in their elder brother's house” (בְּבֵית אֲחֵיהֶם), “on the ashes” (בְּתוֹךְ הָאֵפֶר) and “from the distance” (מֵרֶחֶק). A simple word like “the day,” for instance, may indicate a very different understanding of the relationship of time and space in different genres within the text. Understanding the concept of chronotope helps readers to recognize that a different time and space signals a particular worldview and by noticing a unique worldview in a certain chronotope, readers may realise a change in worldview or point of view in the change in the chronotope in *Job*.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 200–01.

⁵⁶ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 251.

⁵⁷ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 78.

⁵⁸ The change of worldview through the shift of chronotope will be discussed in detail in chapters 2, 3 and 5.

Fourth, chronotope assists readers in discovering the reasons and the justification for the various genres and different images of Job in *Job*. According to Bakhtin, different chronotopes present different genres and, therefore, in *Job* that translates as different images of the man in the prologue and in the dialogue.⁵⁹ The idea of chronotope enables readers to perceive that *Job* strategically uses several different genres and chronotopes to communicate Job's different voices and their development in the dialogue between Job, his three friends, Elihu, God and its readers.⁶⁰

Fifth, chronotope is a useful tool to show the relationship between a text and its readers, because readers likewise are real people who participate in the activity of reading in a specific time and space,⁶¹ and while a text should not be removed completely from its context, at the same time it must speak to readers in their current contexts or it will cease to have meaning and not survive.⁶² According to the Bakhtinian idea, chronotope explains the reason for the survival of Job and *Job* in readership.

Sixth, Bakhtin leads us not only to distinguish the different genres and chronotopes, but also to explore how the interaction and juxtaposition of different chronotopes and genres may be a powerful communicative strategy. Indeed, we will see that the whole issue of how time, space and utterance can constitute and constitute identity and how the shift of chronotope relates to the possibility of change in the identity of the character is not only at the heart of Bakhtin's notion of the chronotope but is a fundamental question and concern for the book of *Job* itself.

The Suitability of Bakhtin's Dialogism for the Reading of Job

This study is not without some precedents. Since Bakhtin, there have been a number of biblical scholars who have read *Job* as a polyphonic text. Walter L. Reed points out several advantages to applying Bakhtin to biblical texts for biblical texts cause problems for readers' understanding because "the different voices, styles, dialects, accents, or genres... rest inertly juxtaposed within a text."⁶³

⁵⁹ See 9 n. 43.

⁶⁰ In chapters 2, 3 and 4, we will discuss how Job's voice and his three friends' voices are developed in detail.

⁶¹ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 252–53.

⁶² Trisha M. Gambaiana Wheelock, "Drunk and Disorderly: A Bakhtinian Reading of the Banquet Scenes in the Book of Esther" (PhD Diss., Baylor University, 2008), 23.

⁶³ Reed, *Dialogues of the Word*, 15.

In particular, T. Stordalen and Newsom provide justification for reading *Job* as a polyphonic text. Stordalen introduces several elements that justify the use of Bakhtin's dialogism to *Job* by discovering several similarities between Dostoyevsky's work and *Job*.⁶⁴ Bakhtin himself never applied his theories to the Bible, but published a detailed study of Dostoyevsky's poetics, so by demonstrating this link, Stordalen hopes to establish the appropriateness of using Bakhtin in this way. The first element involves similarities between the poetics of *Job* and Dostoyevsky. Stordalen points out that both *Job* and Dostoyevsky present their plots in an exaggerated and unrealistic way forming the characters as the voices of ideas that reflect unique points of view in order to provoke readers' doubt, to emphasise characters' voices, to extend dialogues among characters, and to contextualize a general traditional idea into specific life settings.⁶⁵

The second element consists of more specific similarities. According to Stordalen, *Job* explores the same concern raised by Dostoyevsky's poetics. Stordalen isolates the following elements in *Job* to substantiate this claim "a non-hierarchical representation of characters (*ideas*)," "the nature of *voices* in *Job*, and the author's way of interrelating them," and "a non-narrative dimension of the book."⁶⁶ Specifically, the narrators of both Dostoyevsky's poetics and *Job* do not offer any objective presentations of the external world. The narrators in both literatures report the external world through the characters' points of view, and each character in both literatures presents his, or her, own interpretation of the world with no comment from the narrators.⁶⁷

The last similarity between Dostoyevsky's poetics and *Job* is their focus on voices. According to Stordalen, voices in both literary works refer to traditions. The act of referring to traditions of voices provokes other voices to respond and produce comments.⁶⁸ Significantly, he mentions that voices in both literary works are not consistent. He explains the multi-voicedness of each character's voice by offering an example of *Job*'s voice. *Job*'s voice lacks consistency, since his voice has been

moved from praise (1.21) to a peculiarly directed lament (3.1ff) and then to a more conventional one (ch.7); he goes from premeditating a legal con-

⁶⁴ T. Stordalen, "Dialogue and Dialogism in the Book of Job," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 20 (2006): 18–37.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 24–26.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 18, 27–35. The emphasis is original.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

trovery (ch.9) to symbolically performing one (16.18–21, etc.); he employs sapiential instruction (12.7–12), disputation (ch.16) and appeals (19, 19.21f, etc.).⁶⁹

Thus, by identifying the similarities between Dostoyevsky's poetics and *Job*, Stordalen provides a clear justification for the application of Bakhtin's dialogism to *Job*.

Also, in her article and book, Newsom provides a logical explanation for the suitability of Bakhtin's dialogism to *Job* by pointing out several advantages to using dialogism in reading the book of *Job*.⁷⁰ First, dialogism allows readers to view different and unique perspectives and moral imaginations in different genres. Since dialogism re-evaluates genres as modes of seeing and conceptualizing reality according to their own particular worldviews,⁷¹ readers can see multiple varying perspectives coexisting in equal weight when reading the book of *Job*. Second, not only does each genre hold a different perspective, but each different perspective also interacts with every other perspective in the book. Bakhtin's dialogism defines languages as places where both speakers and listeners compete for power to control the meanings of words. Third, dialogism alters the readers' roles in reading the book of *Job*. It helps readers find themselves as active participants rather than passive spectators in the dialogue between Job and his friends' speeches.⁷²

Furthermore, Newsom actually shows in her book how readers can analyze the book of *Job* using Bakhtin's dialogism. In the book, she discusses different genres, which are the prologue, the wisdom dialogue, that is, the dialogue between Job and his three friends, the wisdom poem (chapter 28), Job's last speech (29–31), Elihu's speech, the divine speech (38–41) and the epilogue. She describes in depth how these different genres present unmerged, equally weighted, but different voices in each genre. Specifically, each voice has its own moral imagination, which is "the fundamental aesthetic and cognitive means by which persons and cultures construct meaning, value, and significance."⁷³ Juxtaposed, each imagination quarrels with each of the others. This strategy of Newsom's leaves the door wide

⁶⁹ Ibid., 31–32.

⁷⁰ Carol Newsom, "The Book of Job as Polyphonic Text," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 97 (2002): 87–108 and *The Book of Job*, 21–31.

⁷¹ See in 3; in 4; Newsom, "The Book of Job as Polyphonic Text," 94.

⁷² Newsom, "The Book of Job", 93 and *The Book of Job*, 18.

⁷³ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 262.

open to all readers who hold varied values and worldviews, allowing them to hear other voices, if they read the book of *Job* as a polyphonic text.

*Newsom's/Stordalen's Dialogic Readings of Job and
My Dialogic Reading of Job*

At this point, some readers may question why they should read another monograph based on a dialogic reading of the book of *Job*, since they already have an exceptional book⁷⁴ written by Newsom and Stordalen's article. However, the present book takes a slightly different approach and expands on Newsom's and Stordalen's analyzes of the book using Bakhtinian principles. Newsom initiates a dialogic reading of *Job* but does not fully engage with Bakhtin's dialogism in order to hear each character's unique voice within each genre. Stordalen significantly criticizes Newsom's dialogic reading of *Job* and leads us to see the poetics rather than the genres in *Job*. However, Stordalen does not provide answers to the following questions: How should readers apply dialogism to *Job*? What benefits or advantages does dialogism offer to readers in reading the book of *Job*?

For these reasons, I would like to reread *Job* using Bakhtin's dialogism to analyze each unique voice. In what follows, I would like to present my analysis of *Job* using Bakhtin's dialogism, and to take the analysis a step further than Newsom/Stordalen, by highlighting that which both Newsom and Stordalen have ignored in their analyses.

First, although Newsom attempts to reveal that both unity and disunity coexist in the book of *Job* using Bakhtin's dialogism,⁷⁵ she overemphasizes disunity. The present book argues that summarizing *what* each voice says about Job's suffering and its meaning in the book is not in the end a fully Bakhtinian reading, since Bakhtin avoids the dangers associated with summarizing all conversations in order to find a monologic truth.⁷⁶ To highlight this Bakhtinian reading of the book of *Job*, Newsom contends that the real issue at hand is *how* one says rather than *what* one says.⁷⁷ However, her definition of *how* seems to mean nothing more or less than that, simply, there are different moral imaginations in the different

⁷⁴ Idem.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 261.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 263.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

genres—the prose tale, the wisdom dialogue, the wisdom poem, Job’s last speech (29–31), Elihu’s speech, and the divine speech—of *Job*.

This present book wants to ask the *how*-question in a different way than Newsom asks it. Newsom seems to neglect Bakhtin’s concept of genre as a *speech genre* and the reason behind the emergence of different moral imaginations in different genres or speech genres. There are voices in the speech genres of the book of *Job*, which revolve around Job and his suffering. All of the voices in the book of *Job* are about the different understandings of Job and the reason for his suffering and also have different addressees or concepts of addressees in their peculiar time and space. The different perceptions of Job’s identity, his suffering and addressees produce different moral imaginations in the speech genres of *Job*. That is why this book wants to examine the reasons behind why the speakers say what they say by scrutinizing each voice.

The aim of examining every voice is to perceive how different voices interact dialogically to produce meanings for Job and his suffering. Unlike Newsom, who observes the quarrel between different moral imaginations in the different genres by highlighting the differences between the genres, I will identify how the differences in the voices interact dialogically to complement each other and create one big picture, which is Job’s identity and the reason for his suffering. It is significant to focus on an individual voice in *Job*, as Stordalen states,

In particular, I would like to focus more upon the *poetics* of polyphony in Job, and certainly less upon dialogue between genres.⁷⁸

Newsom focuses differences in “moral imagination” expressed in the prose tale, the speeches of the three friends, the poem of wisdom, the speeches of Elihu, Job’s speeches and the speeches of God respectively. She holds that the most profound reader’s response to the book is *not* a reflection upon propositions uttered by the dialoguing characters, but a “transformation of perception through aesthetic experience” (p. 19f). Moral is often expressed by aesthetic means, especially by narrative, metaphor and style (pp. 32–34). So Newsom elaborates upon moral imaginations in the genres of the book. This orientation is somewhat conspicuous. *Bakhtin insisted that a dialogical composition involves personal voices speaking from a specific life situation. Newsom’s focus would seem potentially to jeopardize this point. . . .*⁷⁹

Although Stordalen brilliantly suggests the significance of personal/characters’ voices in *Job*, he ignores the significance of characters’ voices

⁷⁸ Stordalen, “Dialogue and Dialogism,” 22. The emphasis is original.

⁷⁹ Ibid. The emphasis is added.

in the prologue. He does not directly look at the poetics of the voices in the prologue as polyphony. To further utilize the idea of the poetics of polyphonic voices in the prologue, I will examine the prologue as a polyphonic text.

Second, Newsom validly uses Bakhtin's dialogism and the idea of a polyphonic text to see the whole book of *Job* as such a text. However, she does not regard the prologue as a polyphonic text because of her understanding of the genre of a narrative tale. Instead, she looks at the dialogic relationship between different genres in the book of *Job*. She considers that the prologue is 'dialogized' by the wisdom dialogue, which is a different genre.⁸⁰ My application of Bakhtin's dialogism to the prologue differs from Newsom's. I consider the prologue also to be a polyphonic text containing several independent consciousnesses.

This present book does not ignore the fact that Bakhtin himself argues for the existence of monologic literature and sees the Bible as a prime example. However, the purpose of this chapter is to examine the prologue as a dialogic text to hear/read how the different voices tell their stories about Job. Newsom contends that the entire book is a polyphonic text, because each monologic text, which is a different genre and has a different moral imagination, conflicts with each of the others and shapes the book's nature as a polyphonic text, but she does not examine the possibility that the writer composed the prologue as a polyphonic text. It is my contention that the author intended to write a polyphonic text.⁸¹

There are several reasons behind Newsom's neglect of the prologue as a polyphonic text. First, she clearly distinguishes the implied author of the prologue from the polyphonic author of the whole book.⁸² However, I argue that since "Bakhtin largely finds such dialogical authorship in works actually written by one author,"⁸³ the possibility for the polyphonic author and the implied author being one and the same is as highly probable as Newsom's idea that the author of the prologue wrote the prologue as a monologic text.

⁸⁰ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 24.

⁸¹ Readers may read the author's intention distinctly from the narrator's intention according to Bakhtin's Dialogism. Particularly, readers can read the author's intention as allowing the narrator's voice to sound his or her intention in the prologue. I will discuss the narrator's voice and intention more in depth in chapter 2.

⁸² Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 24.

⁸³ Paul Evans, "The Hezekiah-Sennacherib Narrative as a Polyphonic Text," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 33 (2009): 342.

Second, Newsom treats the prologue as a monologic text, because she believes the genre of the whole prologue to be a didactic tale.⁸⁴ A didactic tale has to be delivered in a coherent, absolute and straightforward way. However, it might be an oversimplification to see the prologue as a didactic tale, because Newsom does not seem to fully engage with the Bakhtinian idea of genre. Newsom seems to adopt a form critical idea of genre rather than a Bakhtinian one. A Bakhtinian one sees genre as defined not by its form but by its addressivity and at the same time it is “the most fundamental unit of communication.”⁸⁵

If genre is understood according to its addressivity and as the most fundamental unit of communication, it should be perceived with utterance as the most fundamental unit of speech because of Bakhtin’s idea where the typical forms of utterance are speech genres as we discussed above.⁸⁶ If genre is associated with utterance, then each utterance in the prologue must be treated as a separate genre. Therefore, it is not impossible to see each utterance in the prologue as a unit having its own moral imagination or ‘voice idea.’ Newsom also ignores the possibility that the narrator’s voice and characters’ voices might represent different genres as well, because they are in different styles: one is a narrative tale; the other is in direct speech.⁸⁷ According to Bakhtin, “there is an ‘organic, inseparable link between style and genre ... [w]here there is style there is genre.’”⁸⁸ So, different styles may reflect different genres. By focusing

⁸⁴ Newsom’s definition of the prologue as a didactic tale (*The Book of Job*, 40) seems to be indebted to Hans-Peter Müller’s study of the genre of the prologue in “Die weisheitliche Lehrerzählung im Alten Testament und seiner Umwelt,” *Die Welt des Orients* 9 (1977): 77–98 and “Die Hiobrahmenerzählung und ihre altorientalischen Parallelen als Paradigmen einer weisheitlichen Wirklichkeitswahrnehmung,” in *The Book of Job*, ed. W.A.M. Beuken, *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium* 114 (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1994), 21–39.

⁸⁵ Thomas Kent, “Hermeneutics and Genre: Bakhtin and the Problem of Communicative Interaction,” in *Landmark Essays on Bakhtin, Rhetoric and Writing*, ed. F. Farmer (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 42.

⁸⁶ See 9n 44, 45; Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 63.

⁸⁷ Evans (“The Hezekiah-Sennacherib Narrative as Polyphonic Text,” 344–5) implies that two different styles of speech represent two different genres by showing the dialogic interaction between two different genres/utterances in the Hezekiah-Sennacherib narrative in 2 Kgs 18–19: “In order to engage these divergent viewpoints in conversation, the author employed several traditional genres to create the dialogue. One was history-like narrative, traditionally employed to demonstrate how the God of Israel defeated Israel’s enemies and to criticize the latter. Another genre the author of the Hezekiah-Sennacherib narrative employed was direct speech. This genre was often employed within history-like narrative to express different viewpoints which were to be contradicted or confirmed by the events of the narrative.”

⁸⁸ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 63, 66.

on each speech or utterance, this book highlights the quarrel or dialogic interaction between speeches or utterances.

Third, Newsom treats the prologue as a monologic text because she reads the narrator's voice there as that of an omniscient, dominant and authoritative voice. Newsom accepts information that has been provided by the narrator without question. As W.C. Booth comments, readers have a predisposition to accept the information about Job *without question/reason* "if [they] are to grasp the story that is to follow."⁸⁹ However, Stordalen advises readers to doubt the narrator's voice. According to Stordalen:

Two matters prevent us from hearing narrator's voice in Job as a reliable report from an omniscient narrator. First, the narrative frame qualifies as fantasy literature. It is far from evident how characters and relations in the fantasy world of the tale would translate into the realistic world reflected in the dialogues. Secondly, following Clines, Newsom and others, the tale makes the impression of being "false naïve," to the extent of overstatement. . . . As an effect, where the narrator voice *could* be heard as giving hints to our perceiving characters in the book, it is either so enigmatic or so pointedly exaggerated, it is difficult to take it seriously (in a realistic sense). Therefore, narrator voice could not be granted a privileged position over other characters in the book, and the tale could not be taken on face value.⁹⁰

Consequently, Stordalen's statement regarding the narrator's unreliability leads readers to read the narrator's voice as part of a non-hierarchical presentation of characters' voices in the prologue⁹¹ and eventually causes readers to see other characters' voices as equally weighted with the narrator's. This idea of the narrator's reliability or unreliability has induced me to analyze the narrator's function in the prologue. Not only does the narrator's voice assist readers to read other characters' voices as equally weighted voices, but the narrator's voice also provokes readers to recognize the narrator's voice as a voice that introduces and presides, introducing and inviting other voices into the prologue.⁹²

Fourth, Newsom does not see the prologue as a polyphonic text because she does not examine how chronotope functions in the text. Clearly, in the prologue, time and space are used in an intrinsically interconnected way to reveal the confrontation between chronotopes; particularly, Job's

⁸⁹ W.C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 3–4.

⁹⁰ Stordalen, "Dialogue and Dialogism," 27–28. The emphasis is original.

⁹¹ Stordalen, "Dialogue and Dialogism," 28.

⁹² I will discuss more about the narrator's unreliability and function as a presider and host to other voices in the next chapter.

chronotope and God's chronotope. While Newsom ignores the different chronotopes in the prologue, I place strong emphasis on the different chronotopes in the prologue.⁹³

The third difference between Newsom's and Stordalen's dialogic readings and my dialogic reading of *Job*, which is the overlooking of the variety of chronotopes in *Job*, hinders Newsom and even Stordalen from reading the relationship between the prologue and the dialogue. Newsom simply reads two different moral imaginations from the two different genres in the prologue and the dialogue, since she is able to make the connection between the two genres. Stordalen also reads the difference in genre between the prologue and the dialogue as evidence of the dialogue's independence from the plot/the prologue because of Bakhtin's statement

The potential endlessness of dialogue in Dostoyevsky's design already in itself answers the question why such dialogue cannot be plot-dependent in the strict sense of the word . . .⁹⁴

However, both Newsom and Stordalen seem not to reckon with Bakhtin's statement that "The shell of dialogue . . . is always intimately plot-related"⁹⁵ and his idea of the dialogic nature of a word, which implies that "there is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits."⁹⁶ Although the prologue and the dialogue present two different moral imaginations and the dialogue is independent from the prologue, voices in the dialogue

⁹³ Different and multiple chronotopes in a single text have already been supported by other Bakhtinian scholars outside of biblical scholarship. Alexandra Ganser, Julia Puhlinger and Markus Rheindorf state in their article that Bakhtin insisted on multiple and relative chronotopes within a single text. Therefore, they contend, "any attempt to fit a text or even a genre into the category of a single chronotope is destined to fail." (Alexandra Ganser, Julia Puhlinger and Markus Rheindorf, "Bakhtin's Chronotope on the Road: Space, Time, and Place in Road Movies Since the 1970s," *Linguistics and Literature* 4/1 (2006): 3) Also, Tamara Danicic uses the term "local chronotopes" to describe the multiplicity of chronotope in a single text or genre and defines the multiplicity of chronotopes as a "matrix" of "local" chronotopes. (Tamara Danicic, "Zeitraeume aus Fleisch und Blut: Chronotopische Konstellationen in zwei Filmen Pedro Almodovars," in *Der Raum im Film. L'espace dans le film*, ed. Susanne Duerr & Almut Steinlein (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 312; Ganser, Puhlinger and Rheindorf quoted the reference in their article "Bakhtin's Chronotope on the Road," 3) Within biblical scholarship, please see Fenntress-Williams, "Location, Location, Location."

⁹⁴ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 252.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 170.

are prepared for by the prologue, according to the Bakhtinian idea,⁹⁷ and voices in the prologue are complemented by voices in the dialogue.⁹⁸

As discussed above, since voices are formed and delivered in a specific time and space, the concept of the chronotope will best explicate how voices in the prologue prepare for voices in the dialogue and how voices in the dialogue complement voices in the prologue.

Finally, Newsom appears to ignore the concept of the dialogic nature of a word or utterance within the dialogue section. Newsom's use of Bakhtin's dialogism focuses on genre. By comparing the dialogue in *Job* to other ancient Near Eastern texts like the Sumerian text 'A Man and His God', *Ludlul bel nemeqi*, a Dialogue between a Man and His God (AO 4462), an Akkadian text from Ugarit designated RS 25.450 and the Babylonian Theodicy, Newsom perceives the dialogue section to be a generic type delivering its own moral imagination.⁹⁹ Newsom's comparison of *Job* to other ancient Near Eastern texts simply points out the similarities in the topoi, motifs and ideas between ancient Near Eastern texts and *Job*.

Further, in realizing the unique moral imagination in the dialogue as a generic unit, Newsom sets out a dialogic interaction among different moral imaginations in the different genres. Specifically, in the dialogue, Newsom illuminates the differences between Job's moral imagination and his three friends' imaginations by discovering the core generative metaphors that govern and shape Job's and his three friends' understandings and privileged genres in which they grasp reality. (Job's three friends' core generative metaphors are binary perspectives—the fate of the righteous and the fate of the wicked—and their privileged genre is narrative; Job's core generative metaphor is legal language and his privileged genre is counter-narrative).¹⁰⁰

However, Newsom's use of Bakhtin's dialogism to discover different moral imaginations between different governing genres in both Job's and his three friends' voices is not adequate as a Bakhtinian or dialogic reading of *Job*, since Newsom is interested in genres more than in word, utterance and voice in *Job*. Since, according to Bakhtin, the basic unit of speech communication or language in literature is an utterance,¹⁰¹ the examination

⁹⁷ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 252.

⁹⁸ The relationship between voices in the prologue and in the dialogue will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

⁹⁹ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 72–89.

¹⁰⁰ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 90, 96–168.

¹⁰¹ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 71ff.

of the dialogic function of an utterance is the central principle in performing a Bakhtinian or dialogic reading of *Job*. The dialogic nature of an individual voice is at the heart of the reading of the dialogue.

Unlike Newsom, Stordalen focuses on an individual voice in *Job*. Stordalen notices the inconsistency of Job's voice in *Job*.¹⁰² He clearly presents the dialogic nature of Job's and his three friends' voices as the characters' multi-voicedness. However, like Newsom, Stordalen fails to fully elucidate the dialogic interaction between Job's voice and his friends' voices. I believe that the study of the dialogic interaction between Job's voice and his three friends' voices—Job's responsive utterance and his three friends' responsive voices—will expound the reason for the endlessness of Job's voice, the differences between Job's moral imagination and his three friends' moral imaginations, and the inconsistency of Job's voice, and will contend that Job's three friends' voices are also inconsistent by evincing each friends' unique voice in the dialogue.

Both Newsom's and Stordalen's works have been a good stepping stone for my research reading *Job* using Bakhtin's dialogism and his concept of chronotopes. Both Newsom and Stordalen have provoked me to read *Job* taking a more Bakhtinian or dialogic approach to see what I had not seen previously in *Job*.

The Establishment of the Text

This book does not ignore the importance of historical questions concerning the different textual traditions and complexities of the text of *Job* and the controversies over its transmission and translation through time. However, the aim of the study is to 'read' the text of *Job* using Bakhtinian principles. This book gives more weight to 'reading' the biblical text of *Job* as it is, rather than to 'analyses' of the historical problems of the text of *Job*, in order to avoid the inevitable assumptions about the unity or disunity of the text that underlie historical critical analyses and corrections of the text, because this book assumes that 'reading' the biblical text as it has been given to us is prior to analyses of the text that focus on historical critical questions.

The reason for this assumption is as follows: according to Robert Polzin, literary analysis comes before historical critical analysis.¹⁰³ Polzin argues

¹⁰² Stordalen, "Dialogue and Dialogism," 31–33.

¹⁰³ Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 5–7.

for the idea of the priority of literary analysis by quoting I. Soter's words and answering the question: "What comes first from a methodological point of view: a historical (genetic or diachronic) approach or a descriptive (synchronic or literary critical) approach?"¹⁰⁴ According to Soter,

We must put an end to the dilemma, but this is possible only if we start from the book as an artistic creation, i.e., we must give priority to critical-aesthetic considerations and only afterwards turn to historical problems. . . . Of course, "priority" in this sense is not priority in rank, since criticism starting from the literary product, and historical research returning to it, are both secondary seen from the point of view of the book itself.¹⁰⁵

Richard G. Moulton also strengthens Soter's statement and Polzin's idea of the priority of literary analysis:

Historic and literary study are equal in importance: but for priority in order of time *the literary treatment has the first claim*. The reason of this is that the starting point of historic analysis must be that very existing text, which is the sole concern of the morphological study. The historic inquirer will no doubt add to his examination of the text light drawn from other sources; he may be led in his investigation to alter or rearrange the text; but *he will admit that the most important single element on which he has to work is the text as it has come down to us*. But, if the foundation principle of literary study be true, this existing text cannot be truly interpreted until it has been read in the light of its exact literary structure.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, Polzin supports my argument of focusing on 'reading' the text of Job using Bakhtin's ideas rather than focusing on historical questions by introducing Bakhtin's agreement with this sequence of reading:

In discussing why he [Mikhail Bakhtin] does a literary critical analysis of Dostoevsky's work before tackling historical questions, he [Mikhail Bakhtin] admits that such a preliminary literary investigation does need to be deepened by historical perspectives. Nevertheless, "without such a preliminary orientation, historical investigations degenerate into a disconnected series of chance comparisons" (1973:230, n.4).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 6.

¹⁰⁵ Istvan Soter ("The Dilemma of Literary Science," *New Literary History* 2 (1970): 94) is quoted by Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 6.

¹⁰⁶ Richard G. Moulton, *The Literary Study of the Bible: An Account of the Leading Forms of Literature Represented in the Sacred Writings* (London: Isbister and Company Limited, 1899), viii–ix. The emphasis is added.

¹⁰⁷ Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist*, 6–7.

For this reason, this book approaches the text of *Job* as it is with Bakhtin's dialogism rather than being concerned with historical critical analysis and its questions.

Second, this book reads the Masoretic Text from among the possible variant textual traditions of the books of *Job*. Hugh Pyper offers good reasons for the justification of the choice of the MT. In his book, Pyper defends himself in choosing the MT by using Peter Miscall's, C. Conroy's, Lyle Eslinger's and G.S. Mowatt's statements.¹⁰⁸ Based upon Pyper's argument, I also quote Miscall's, Conroy's and Mowatt's statements to defend my choice of the MT for reading *Job*. Miscall states:

I do not automatically consider the Masoretic text to be the best: I leave it as it is, because text-critical study should be preceded by extended readings, wherever possible, of each version. Is it obvious that the Septuagint represents a better, or more correct, text? Perhaps the two, and others, can be read and compared and contrasted, but not necessarily used, to produce the correct and original text.¹⁰⁹

Conroy mentions:

It should be clear, then, that this preference for the MT readings is a pragmatic and provisional option; it is not meant as an expression of Masoretic fundamentalism, and still less as a camouflaged form of theological fundamentalism.¹¹⁰

And finally, Mowatt declares:

The author's version of his own work is a desirable starting point of the literary historian and critic. Where this is not available, however, it is doubtful whether we are justified in trying to reconstruct it. If we do try, we are obscuring our own function, which is to account for the text we have...¹¹¹

Due to the above reasons, in this study, I will read the Masoretic Text of *Job* as it has been given to us and use the NRSV for the English translation, but if there are anomalies challenging the MT, I will provide my own translations with discussions in the footnotes.

¹⁰⁸ Hugh Pyper, *David As Reader: 2 Samuel 12: 1–15 and the Poetics of Fatherhood*, Biblical Interpretation Series 23 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 12–13.

¹⁰⁹ Pyper (*David As Reader*, 12) quoted from Peter Miscall, *1 Samuel: A Literary Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), viii.

¹¹⁰ Pyper (*David As Reader*, 12) quoted from C. Conroy, *Absalom Absalom! Narrative and Language in 2 Sam 13–20* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 13.

¹¹¹ Pyper (*David As Reader*, 13) quoted from G.S. Mowatt, *Friedrich von Husen, Introduction, Text Commentary and Glossary*, Anglica Germanica II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 26.

The Scope of the Text

The purpose of the book is to read the voices in *Job* through the lens of Bakhtin's dialogism, particularly chronotope. However, reading the whole book of *Job* is in itself a huge undertaking. Due to my limited space and time, unfortunately, I cannot analyze voices within the entire book of *Job*. So, I would like to select and focus on voices in the first eleven chapters of *Job* to serve as an example of a Bakhtinian reading of *Job* and as a platform for an alternative reading of the rest of the book of *Job*. Why have I chosen *Job* 1–11 in particular?

First, I have chosen *Job* 1–11 which consists of the prologue and the first cycle of the dialogue, because I would like to study different voices in the prologue and in the dialogue to explain the relationship between the prologue and the dialogue in *Job* rather than voices in the prose tale or in the dialogue alone. By identifying various voices both in the prologue and in the dialogue by means of chronotope, the book would like to discover how the chronotopes of the prologue and of the dialogue differ, how the chronotope changes from the prologue to the dialogue and why voices in the prologue and in the dialogue are different.

Second, I have chosen the prologue and the first cycle of the dialogue because I would like to see what happens to the narrator's, God's, *hassatan's*, the messengers' and Job's wife's voices. In the prologue, readers can hear the narrator's voice, Job's voice, God's voice, *hassatan's* voice, the messengers' voices and Job's wife's voice, but in the dialogue, readers rarely hear the narrator's voice and cannot hear God's, *hassatan's*, the messengers' or Job's wife's voices. I would like to search out the reason for the disappearance in the dialogue of the voices of all the other characters' in the prologue apart from Job and his voice.

To do so, it is important to observe that Job's voice in the prologue differs from his voice in the dialogue, which leads to the third reason for choosing the prologue and the first cycle of the dialogue. I would like to compare the two different voices of Job in the prologue and the dialogue. I wish to explain the change in Job's voice from the prologue to the dialogue by looking at the shift in chronotopes from the prologue to the dialogue. Particularly, by comparing Job's voice in the prologue with Job's voice in the dialogue, I would like to read that, even though there appears to be a change, Job's voice in the prologue is still very much alive in his voice in the dialogue.

In the same way, in reading Job's three friends' voices in the dialogue, I would like to hear voices from the prologue echoing in Job's three friends'

voices in the dialogue. Although God and *hassatan* no longer appear in the dialogue, their voices are still alive in the three friends' voices. I wish to evince these voices echoing between the prologue and the dialogue.

Fourth, I note that the first cycle of dialogue ends at chapter 11. There are diverse opinions regarding the final chapter of the first cycle.¹¹² However, this book considers the first cycle of dialogue to encompass the chapters from chapter 3 to chapter 11, since Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar all give their first speech in these chapters.

The end of chapter 11 also appears to respond directly to the beginning of chapter 3. Although, in 3:3–6, Job wishes for his day to become dark and for his night to become deep darkness so that morning does not come, Zophar responds with exactly the opposite words to Job by saying that Job's world will be brighter than noonday and his night will be like morning. Due to Job's words in chapter 3 and Zophar's responsive words in chapter 11, I have chosen to link chapter 3 to chapter 11 as the first unit or cycle of the dialogue.

Outline of the Book

At this point, I aim to introduce an itinerary for my readers to gain a better understanding and sense of this study. The main purpose of my study is to read the multiple voices in *Job* 1–11 utilizing Bakhtin's chronotope/dialogism to reveal how each voice reads and responds to other voices to finalize whether or not Job is a perfectly pious man. In order to do this, I shall take the following steps: chapter 2 analyzes the prologue as a polyphonic text to hear and distinguish different voices—the narrator's voice, Job's voice, God's voice, *hassatan's* voice, the four messengers' voices and Job's wife's voice. To hear/read each voice in each scene and the interactions of the voices in the prologue, the chapter applies the concept of the chronotope to delve into the role of specific temporal and spatial indicators in which the various voices in the prologue are heard distinctively.

Chapter 3 closely examines Job's voice in the dialogue. The chapter reads Job's voice in chapters 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10 of *Job* to clarify how Job's

¹¹² David Clines (*Job 1–20: Word Biblical Commentary* [Dallas: Word Books, 1989], xxxvi) and Georg Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*. [KAT, 16; Gutersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1963], 41) see *Job* 1–11 as the first cycle. Robert Gordis (*The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation, and Special Studies* [New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978], 41–153) demarcates the first cycle from chapter 4 to chapter 14 of *Job* and excludes chapter 3 from the first cycle.

voice understands and defines Job in the chronotope of the dialogue by responding to his suffering and his three friends' voices. Job's voice in the dialogue is formed as a responsive voice to the voices, including his own in the prologue and three friends' voices in the dialogue.

Chapter 4 presents Job's three friends' voices. In chapter 4, I will establish that Job's three friends' voices are responsive voices to Job's voices and the other friends' voices. In the chapter, I will discover voices from the prologue echoing in Job's three friends' voices. In Job's three friends' voices, readers may find *hassatan's* voice echoing from the prologue. The studies in chapters 2, 3 and 4 offer an insight into the relationship of voices between the prologue and the dialogue, which leads me to form chapter 5.

Chapter 5 articulates that while, on the one hand, the voices in the chronotope of the dialogue can exist because of the voices in the chronotope of the prologue, on the other hand, the voices in the prologue can also be complemented by the voices in the dialogue. Specifically, in order to explain the complementary relationship between the voices in the prologue and voices in the dialogue, the chapter analyzes key words used in both the prologue and the dialogue to depict how the different voices creatively discover different meanings for the same words.

I conclude the book, in chapter 6, by showing how this Bakhtinian reading of *Job* 1–11 may apply to the rest of the book of Job. In particular, I will briefly deliberate upon how Job's voice and his three friends' voices in the second and third cycles, Elihu's voice, and the divine speech fail to finalize Job and how the narrator's, Job's, and other characters' voices in the prologue and in the epilogue are different. In doing so, I will conclude that both Job and the book of *Job* are unfinalizable in readers' readings.

CHAPTER TWO

JOB IN THE CHRONOTOPE OF THE PROLOGUE

The prologue of *Job* begins with the verse

There was a man (אִישׁ) who was in the land of Uz; Job is his name. That man was blameless (תָּם) and upright (יָשָׁר), one who feared God (יִרָא אֱלֹהִים) and turned away from evil' (סָר מֵרָע) (1:1).¹

Upon reading the opening verse of the prologue, readers may perceive that the narrator identifies *a man* (אִישׁ) whose name is Job, who lives in the land of Uz as *that man* (הָאִישׁ הַהוּא) who is blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil.

In asking God, who repeats the narrator's statement in 1:9: "Does Job fear God without reason?," *hassatan* seems to challenge the narrator's statement in the heavenly scene and due to that discrepancy, readers may also be doubting the narrator's utterance regarding the juxtaposition between a man and perfect piety: How can any man, constrained, as we all are, to live in a specific place with a certain name, be such a perfect (תָּם) man? Why does the narrator define Job, who is a man and in the land of Uz, as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil?

The purpose of this chapter is to answer these questions by probing into each voice in the prologue to see how each voice responds to this statement about a man (אִישׁ) who is perfect (תָּם). As a polyphonic text, the prologue consists of six scenes: The first (earthly) scene (1:1–5), the second (heavenly) scene (1:6–12), the third (earthly) scene (1:13–22), the fourth (heavenly) scene (2:1–7a), the fifth (earthly) scene (2:7b–10) and the sixth (earthly) scene (2:11–13). Each scene includes two or three voices. The first scene introduces the narrator's voice and Job's voice; the second scene includes the narrator's voice, God's voice and *hassatan's* voice; and the third scene has the narrator's voice, Job's voice and the messengers' voices. In the fourth scene, readers hear the same voices as in the second scene: the narrator's voice, God's voice and *hassatan's* voice. The fifth scene introduces Job's wife and represents the discussion

¹ As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the translation of the Hebrew verse is from the NRSV, unless otherwise stated.

between Job and his wife. Lastly, in the sixth scene, readers only hear the narrator's voice introducing Job's three friends and their responses to Job. By treating each voice equally, this chapter analyzes the function of each voice in each scene with respect to the question of whether or not Job is a completely perfect man.

After the examination, the chapter will claim that the purpose of the narrator's voice in the introduction in 1:1 is not actually to finalize Job as a completely perfect man, but rather to invite voices to anticipate the finalization of Job as blameless/perfect, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. Also, the chapter will evince that, alongside the narrator's voice, characters in the prologue do not have sufficient voice to determine Job adequately as a perfectly pious man and that the prologue in fact exists to *unfinalize* Job.

Consequently, the chapter will enunciate that the purpose of the prologue is to provoke readers to participate actively in the act of finalizing Job as a man who is perfect, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil by reading questions from various voices in the prologue and expecting more voices yet to come. From the following section, I will examine in detail how each voice in each scene functions to finalize and unfinalize this image of Job.

The First Scene (Earthly Realm: 1:1–5)

In the first scene, readers read/hear two voices: one is the narrator's voice and the other is Job's voice. In the scene, readers may read the narrator's voice as an authoritative voice finalizing Job and his character. However, the narrator's voice is actually not an authoritative voice finalizing Job, but rather a voice making him an *unfinalized* character. The narrator as a presider invites both readers' and other characters' voices including Job's voice² to characterize Job by displaying Job's unfinalized character. This

² At this point, one may question just how the narrator's voice and Job's voice (and other characters' voices) differ. It is possible that one may think of Job's voice as the narrator's voice. However, it is also possible to argue that the two voices are different, since according to Bakhtin the basic unit for communication is an utterance and the boundaries of each utterance are determined by a change of the speaking subject, that is, the speaker. (Bakhtin, *Speech Genre and Other Late Essays*, 71) According to this concept, the narrator's voice and Job's voice are different utterances, because the speaker has changed. Bakhtin views an author's act of creating a character in a typical novel and particularly in the book of *Job* as an artistic and aesthetic activity. "For art to exist at all there must be alterity. Moreover, the consciousness of the creator must exist on a qualitatively different level

section will reflect on how the narrator plays his or her role of inviting Job's voice and readers to question Job as a man (אִישׁ) who is perfect (תָּם).

The narrator starts the book of *Job* with the following clauses: "A man was in the land of Uz; Job was his name"³ (1:1a). As readers with the competency to read Hebrew, we can ascertain the main purpose of the narrator's voice in the prologue from this very first clause. The very first clause does not start with the usual formula for a Hebrew narrative, which is וַיְהִי אִישׁ (there was a man) but instead starts with אִישׁ הָיָה (a man there was). Similarly, the narrator introduces this man's name in reverse order to the traditional order, that is predicate-subject: אִיּוֹב שְׁמוֹ. This clause is a nominal clause and the standard order for it would be subject-predicate, for example: וַשְׁמוֹ אֶלְקָנָה (1 Samuel 1:1) or וַשְׁמוֹ מֵרְדֵּכִי (Esther 2:5).^{4,5} By dint of the narrator's unique use of the order verb/predicate and subject in the first Hebrew verse, readers may perceive that the narrator's primary focus in the prologue is on "a man."

Readers are likely to consider the word "a man" as familiar and easily identifiable until they read on and see that the narrator qualifies this word with attributes that are not usually associated with it. In breaching readers' common expectation of "a man," the narrator may be deliberately highlighting the unlikelihood of the accuracy of the qualification of the noun "man" with the qualifiers "blameless," "upright," "a fearer of God," "a shunner of evil" in order to provoke the readers' questions.

Actually, the narrator's introduction of a man whose name was Job, who was in the land of Uz and who was perfectly pious provokes readers to ask questions rather than to have a clear understanding regarding the man. In what follows, I examine specifically how the narrator makes readers ask questions concerning the man.

The narrator's introductory voice in the first clause omits certain key elements that are often used to introduce characters in the Hebrew Bible. The narrator does not provide us with exact information about Job's

from that of the one created." (Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 41) Therefore, in the prologue of the book of *Job*, the narrator's voice must exist on a qualitatively different level from that of the one created, which is Job. This theory can be applied in principle to other scenes in the prologue as well, so that readers may hear various different voices such as God's voice, *hassatan's* voice and so on in the remaining scenes.

³ The translations are mine.

⁴ Esther 2:5 has the same formula as Job 1:1.

⁵ Meir Weiss (*The Story of Job's Beginning* [Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1983], 18–19) clearly explains the reverse order of Job's name in this sentence.

temporal, genealogical or geographical background.⁶ First, the narrator seems uninterested in informing us of the period in which Job lives. Second, the narrator does not give any genealogical information regarding the main character. Usually, when characters are introduced in the Hebrew Bible, the Hebrew Bible uses either or both elements in the following formula 'X (name) *ben* (בן) Y (name)' and/or gentilic endings (י) to indicate their origins.⁷ However, in *Job* 1:1, the narrator's introduction of Job as a character in *Job* uses neither the formula 'X *ben* Y' nor gentilic endings⁸ to inform us about Job's genealogical background. Instead, the narrator informs his or her readers only of the man's name and place of residence. These references do not necessarily imply Job's origin.⁹

This omission on the part of the narrator causes readers more confusion and uncertainty, because the absence of Job's genealogical information relates Job to other mysterious figures. Readers who are familiar with Abraham's story in Genesis 14:18–20 may recall that in those verses, Melchizedek is introduced without any genealogical information and the only available information is his name and his location, which are vague to readers. Just as Melchizedek the king of Salem (Genesis 14:18) remains a mysterious figure,¹⁰ in the prologue of *Job*, Job appears more as a mysterious or ambiguous figure than a clearly perceivable character.

Third, the narrator does not give us any clear information regarding Job's geographical location. The only available information on his geographical location is that the narrator locates the "אִישׁ" (man) in the land of Uz rather than any other place. The narrator designates the land of Uz as Job's space. If a specific location delivers a clear meaning to readers, that specific location of a character's residence in literature usually restricts the possibilities available for understanding a given character.

⁶ Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 71) points out that the narrative begins without exact information about time, genealogy or geography: "Die Erzählung beginnt ohne genauere zeitliche Angaben im märchenhaften Stil... Wie die Zeitbestimmung fehlt, so verzichtet die Erzählung auf jede Genealogie... und geographische Näherbestimmung."

⁷ Selected examples from the Hebrew Bible: Gen. 4:16–23; 5; 10; 11:27; 26:34; Lev 10:4; Num. 1:5–15; 2:5; Josh. 1:1; 7:18; Judg. 1:3; 3:15, 31; 4:6, 12; 6:11; 9:1; 12:13; 13:1–3; Ruth 1:2; 2:1; 1 Sam. 1:1; 9:1–2; 14:1, 3, 50; 17:12; 25:3; 30:7; 2 Sam. 2:8, 13; 16:5, 9; 17:27; 18:2; 20:1; 23:9, 20, 24; Neh. 1:1; 3:4, 6, 8–30; Esther 2:5; 3:1; Isa. 1:1; Jer. 1:1; Ezek. 1:3; Dan. 1:6; 9:1; Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jon. 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1

⁸ Job's lack of gentilic ending will be discussed further later.

⁹ The fact that the phrase "in the land of Uz" does not necessarily imply Job's origin will be discussed more in the next section.

¹⁰ The book of Hebrews in the New Testament clearly interprets Melchizedek the king of Salem as a mysterious figure from Gen. 14:18–20. "This 'King Melchizedek of Salem'... Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever" (Heb. 7:1–3).

However, since we have no other information in the book, or indeed the Hebrew Bible, about the land of Uz,¹¹ this leaves us ignorant of Job's precise geographical and ethnic location. The land of Uz functions as a no-place to readers.¹² Modern readers may also find it difficult to discern whether or not the first readers of *Job* knew of Job's location in the land of Uz and could flesh this out in more detail. As far as the modern reader can judge, the narrator appears to have *intentionally* located Job in a place no one can identify. The narrator may have intended to offer a different implication through the use of the phrase "in the land of Uz" than merely pinning down Job's actual location.

Be that as it may, in the first verse, the narrator does imply that the chronotope of Job in his or her first utterance is circumscribed by including the phrase "בְּאֶרֶץ." Job's chronotope is confined to the land (בְּאֶרֶץ).¹³ Job's space, limited to the land of Uz, reveals Job's human inability to be omnipresent. His children and his cattle, camels, and so on are scattered all over the place. Job cannot take care of all his possessions by himself

¹¹ Some scholars identify the location of the land of Uz with Hauran in northern Mesopotamia, with a district in Arabia, or with Damascus. The LXX (42:17b–c) identifies the location of Uz as being on the border of Idumea and Arabia (Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Job as Jobab: The Interpretation of Job in LXX Job 42:17b–e," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120/1 (2001): 42). Also, the land of Uz perhaps appears in a Lihyanite tribal name, al 'Aus, and in the place name Khirbet el-'Is (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 10). However, scholars prefer the opinion that the land of Uz equates with Edom or its districts. The reason for this is that the land of Uz is in parallel with Edom in Lam. 4:21 (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 10; Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985], 86; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 72), the personal name Uz is in an Edomite genealogy (Gen. 10:23; 22:21; 36:28) and it is highly probable that "most of the personal names in Job have an Edomite origin" (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 10). According to the above scholarship, the book clearly recognizes that though there has been much effort to identify the location of Uz, scholars or commentators have not come to a consensus. The very fact that so much effort has been exhausted to date to identify the location of Uz is a clear indication that scholars have recognized the location of Uz as unclear in their readings and the fact that there has been no consensus reached to date further strengthens the idea that the location of Uz is obscure and ambiguous, since the book of *Job* is silent "on the issues of Job's identity, ethnicity, and relation to the nation Israel" (Reed, "Job as Jobab," 33). Hence, the book argues that the phrase "the land of Uz" functions to point out the ambiguity of the narrator's voice in the prologue.

¹² Clines (*Job* 1–20, 10) points out that "Israelites themselves may not have known" the exact location of the land of Uz but they would have known that it was not in Israel just as we know that it is not in Israel. However, I question Clines' claim. The problem is that we, as modern readers, are not only uninformed as to the exact location of the land of Uz, but we also do not know what the Israelites' and/or the first readers' knew about the location of the land of Uz. (Cf. Reed, "Job as Jobab," 33)

¹³ Not all chronotopes reveal the temporal and spatial sides equally, but in some chronotopes, time takes precedence over space and in other chronotopes, space takes precedence over time (Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 201). In the first verse of chapter 1, in Job's chronotope, space takes precedence over time.

simultaneously. At the same time, Job's geographical limitations and his status as a man signify his limited knowledge. Although Job has perfect piety and abundant possessions, he is not omniscient. He cannot know everything that happens around him and has to depend on others to find out narrative events in *Job*. The narrator wants readers to begin their readings of the development of Job's character with an awareness of Job's chronotopic limitations in knowledge.

After introducing Job's space, the narrator reveals the man's name as Job. Again, the name¹⁴ "אִיּוֹב"¹⁵ does not have any other association outside the text. According to David Clines, "the name Job is not attested elsewhere in Hebrew."¹⁶ This implies that the meaning of the Hebrew name is unclear to readers reading the text in Hebrew.¹⁷

¹⁴ Tzvetan Todorov (*Symbolisme et Interprétation* [Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1978], 96) suggests that the most ambiguous words are the proper nouns, which are names. Todorov continues to explain that because the proper nouns are the most ambiguous words, every exegetic tradition pays particular attention to the words. ("La classe de mots de sens le plus pauvre est évidemment celle des *noms propres*. Ce qui explique que, dans quasiment toute tradition exégétique, une attention particulière leur soit accordée." [The emphasis is original])

¹⁵ In Biblical scholarship, there have been attempts to identify the meaning of the name 'אִיּוֹב'. Scholars have relied on extrabiblical sources to identify the name 'אִיּוֹב' as a Semitic name. They identify the name 'Job' as 'Ay(y)abum' (W.F. Albright, "The Land of Damascus between 1850 and 1750 B.C.," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 83 (1941): 30–36), 'Ayabi-ilu' (W.F. Albright, "North-west Semitic Names in a List of Egyptian Slaves from the Eighteenth Century B.C.," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 74 (1954): 223–33), 'Ayyab' (W.F. Albright, "Two Little Understood Amarna Letters from the Middle Jordan Valley," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 89 (1943): 7–19), or 'Ayyabum' (H.B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1965], 103, 161), which can mean 'where is my father?' (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 10–11). However, Clines (*Job 1–20*, 11) sees the most obvious connection of it with the root 'אִיב', which means 'to hate'. From the root, readers can read two different meanings by looking at its analogies to the passive participial form and the active participial form: the first one is 'the hated or persecuted one' (cf. Gordis, *The Book of Job*, p. 10) in the passive participial form and the second one is 'the hater' (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 11) in the active participial form. However, the book reads the name in the book of *Job* as ambiguous, because the book reads the intention of the text or the polyphonic author of *Job* to make the name ambiguous so that readers may characterize Job by dialogically interacting with other voices not just by reading the meaning of the name since, according to Clines (*Job 1–20*, 11), "there is no hint in Old Testament or rabbinic sources that any particular meaning was attached to the name."

¹⁶ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 10.

¹⁷ Clines (*Job 1–20*, 10–11) and Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 71–72) provide their explanations for the possible meaning of the name 'Job' by looking at similar names from the extrabiblical texts. However, I would like to focus on how the name 'Job' can be perceived by readers who have read the Hebrew Bible, since I am dealing with the book of *Job* within the context of the Hebrew Bible.

Clines *reads* the ambiguity in the meaning of the name “Job” with the location of the land of “Uz” and argues, “Job’s moral character is the theme of this scene, and the barest identification of the man is all that is needed.”¹⁸ Yet, Clines does not further pursue the importance of the ambiguities of both the meaning of the name and the space, because he ceases his reading with the narrator’s focus on Job’s character rather than his name and location. However, the ambiguity in the meaning of Job’s name (אִיּוֹב)¹⁹ requires further examination, because it may reflect the narrator’s intention for readers to expand and broaden their reading competences. Consequently, the ambiguity may influence readers’ readings of Job and his character described in the next sentence.

As with the location and significance of the land of Uz, the meaning and significance of Job’s name do not help readers connect to a context. The ambiguity in the meaning of Job’s name does not act as a chronotopic motif²⁰ for readers, since Job’s name does not imply a chronotopic presentation in which time covers space and space moves time. The lack of a chronotopic presentation of the proper name may confuse readers about Job the character, because the perceiving of the significance²¹ of the proper name is produced within a context²² and chronotope produces a circumstance for a context and delivers the significance of the Hebrew name to readers, just as Tzvetan Todorov says:

Le discours est une manifestation concrète de la langue, et il se produit nécessairement dans un contexte particulier, ou entrent en ligne de compte non seulement les éléments linguistiques mais aussi *les circonstances de leur production*: interlocuteurs, *temps* et *lieu*, rapports existant entre ces éléments extralinguistiques.²³

¹⁸ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 9.

¹⁹ According to Pyper (*David As Reader*, 56–57), a proper name in the Hebrew Bible summons “a more or less complex schema for the reader” and “acts like any other descriptive attribution in restricting, but not dictating, the possibilities to be activated in the development of the character.”

²⁰ Bakhtin presents a (chronotopic) motif as “encountering on the road.” When two times and spaces that were previously joined but have become separated meet on the road by accident, the new meaning can be realised.

²¹ There is a distinction between meaning and significance in language. According to Tzvetan Todorov, meaning is the grammatical and linguistic meaning but significance is a comprehension in a certain context and circumstance. (Todorov, *Symbolisme et Interprétation*, 9–10)

²² Mika Lahteenmaki, “On Meaning and Understanding: A Dialogical Approach,” *Dialogism* 1 (1998): 79–88.

²³ “Discourse is a concrete manifestation of language and it is produced necessarily within a particular context where are taken into account not only the linguistic elements

Most readers understand names in the Hebrew Bible not only by deciphering their linguistic elements or literal meanings but also by responding to the chronotopic dimensions of names. This is linked to the implicit narratives that may be attached to a particular name. As an example,²⁴ when readers read Isaiah 1:10 “Hear the word of the Lord, rulers of *Sodom*; give ear to the law of God, people of *Gomorrah*”²⁵ (שמעו דבר-יהוה קציני (סדם האזינו תורת אלהינו עם עמרה), readers realize that the addressee of the speech is Israel/Judah/Jerusalem/the daughter of Zion (Isaiah 1:1, 3, 8) and that she is not Sodom and Gomorrah. However, readers may take Isaiah 1:10 to mean that Jerusalem is in a time when her sins are overflowing and in a place where she is being judged like Sodom and Gomorrah, since the names of Sodom and Gomorrah remind readers of the event that happened to Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19. Thus, the event in Genesis 19 guides readers to interpret Isaiah 1:10 as Israel/Judah/Jerusalem/the daughter of Zion under God’s judgement.

In this way, due to the nature and function of chronotope in the text, the chronotopic motif of the name strengthens the function of the proper name in the reading procedure, thereby narrowing the possible ways in which readers will form the character. In other words, the proper name itself can be chronotopic in terms of the assimilation of actual temporal and spatial information and conditions with respect to the character. The chronotopicity of the proper name presents images which are created in time²⁶ and provokes readers to read the images by invoking the chronotopes linked to the name.²⁷ Due to this, readers restrict the possible meanings of the name in order to be able to read the character.²⁸

However, the proper name in the prologue of *Job* plays a different role. The narrator does not provide a chronotopic motif in Job’s name which could enable readers to choose or create a meaning from their “memory”²⁹

but also the circumstances of their production: interlocutors, time and space, and connections existing between these extralinguistic elements.” (Todorov, *Symbolisme et Interprétation*, 9; the translation is mine; the emphases are added)

²⁴ The Hebrew Bible provides more examples of the functions of Hebrew names as chronotopic motifs. Cf. Pss. 78:12; 80:2, 8; 83:6–9; 87:4; 95:8; 99:6.

²⁵ The translation is mine.

²⁶ According to Bakhtin, every image is chronotopic and language as a treasure-house of images is chronotopic too, because the literary image in the name can be described in the temporal sequence. (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 251).

²⁷ Ibid., 252.

²⁸ Pyper, *David As Reader*, 57.

²⁹ For Bakhtin, “memory” in the process of the creation of meanings in reading takes place “in the great objective memory of humankind.” In memory, the past can be renewed and the inhabited meaning from the past is revealed in its renewed form. (David Shep-

and read Job via their previous reading experience.³⁰ This makes it extremely difficult for readers to read Job in the first verse. However, if readers ceased to read *Job* because of such ambiguities, then the book would have disappeared long ago. On the contrary, for the sake of Job's survival in the text, the narrator³¹ opens a space for readers to continue to read Job even in the midst of such difficulty in reading him. The narrator allows Job's name to embody the readers' experience. The chronotope of Job's name by default becomes open to representing the readers' time and space for Job.

By reading³² their experience of the way Job is represented, readers can read their own experience in Job. Job also struggles to read his own environment. This is how the narrator intends readers to develop their reading of Job in the future movement of time and space as their reading of the prologue/book continues, because

the reading process seeks to integrate as much detail as possible into a meaningful pattern, to compress a maximum of possible meanings into a select set of symbols.³³

Job is, in that sense, a blank space and the task of reading becomes one of filling out the chronotopic implications of the character with the vaguest of clues.

The narrator does not provide³⁴ a rounded picture of Job. Instead, the narrator offers the proper name like an empty box to be filled,³⁵ so that

herd, "A Feeling for History?: Bakhtin and 'The Problem of Great Time'" *SEER* 84 (2006): 36–7 and n. 14).

³⁰ Jacques Derrida suggests that a proper name remains untranslatable because it does not belong to the language or to the system of the language and continues to say that people understand rather than translate what a proper name means because they have experienced it. (Jacques Derrida, "Des Tours De Babel," *Semeia* 9 (1991): 8–9 [translated by Joseph F. Graham]).

³¹ The narrator might have already experienced the difficulty in understanding Job the character.

³² Reading itself is a choronotopic act because reading is a process in time and space. (cf. Sabine Gross, "Reading Time—Text, Image, Film," *Time & Society* 1 (1992): 207–22) When readers read the text, readers anticipate the chronotopic act, so called reading. Through the chronotopic act, readers may interact with another (or other) chronotope(s) in the text. By interacting with the chronotope(s) in the text, readers are creating meaning and a chronotopic motif for the words they read.

³³ Green, *How are the Mighty Fallen*, 69.

³⁴ Why the narrator does not provide a rounded picture is not clear in the book of *Job*. There may be several reasons one of which may simply be the narrator's lack of knowledge of Job.

³⁵ In other narratives in the Hebrew Bible, sometimes the characters are given certain characteristics or meanings in the beginning but they can alter or change in the process of reading. However, in the case of the book of *Job*, the narrator does not give Job the

readers³⁶ can come to know and construct the significance of the Hebrew name through the process of reading, which is a “matter of gradual revelation of knowledge.”³⁷ In reading Job in the first two sentences of the book, the land of Uz and the Hebrew name stimulate readers to formulate the question and invite them to engage, along with the narrator, with the problem of how to construct an adequate definition of Job as a pious man in *Job*.³⁸ Therefore, as their reading progresses through the prologue and poetic sections of the book, readers will see progressive changes in the meaning of the name Job. Pyper clearly indicates the relationship between the character’s name and the reading process in giving meaning to a character:

The ‘character’ then is something constructed by the reader from the text, something ‘fathered’ on the text by the reader. David is a field of possibilities, activated and filled out by the reader, in a complex interplay of the polysemous hints offered by the text and the structures of expectation evoked both by the text and by the interpretative schemas that the reader brings to the text.³⁹

The reader’s experience of a minimally defined chronotope and the difficulty in understanding the first three words, “a man,” “land,” and “Job,” influences their understanding of the relationship of Job to what is described: his perfect character and well-balanced fortune. By examining the narrator’s general description of Job more closely, readers are able to perceive the relationship between Job and his character in detail in the narrator’s voice.

After introducing Job’s name and his geographical location, the narrator takes several steps to introduce Job, our hero, further. The first piece of further information concerns Job’s moral character: he is described as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. The second supplies information about Job’s seven sons and three daughters. The third describes his possessions: seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred oxen, five hundred she-asses and many servants and leads to

character any specific characteristics from which readers might discern any specific significance or meaning.

³⁶ In the context, the narrator is also considered to be one of the readers, who gather information about the character to build up the character. Actually, the narrator exists as a reader who reads other readers’ voices, those of Job, God, *hassatan*, Job’s friends, Job’s wife and the narrator’s audiences.

³⁷ Pyper, *David As Reader*, 55.

³⁸ The voices’ dialogical interaction will be examined in detail in chapter 5.

³⁹ Pyper, *David As Reader*, 59.

the narrator's conclusive statement about Job's great reputation: "that man was greater than all the sons of the East."⁴⁰ The fourth element describes Job's sons' and daughters' harmonious and pleasurable lives. Finally, the narrator introduces what Job usually did after his children's seven-day-cycle of feasts: Job consecrates his children by offering burnt offerings. In this way, according to the Hebrew 'vav + verb' structure, all the dependent clauses in the prologue describe Job and what kind of man he is.

When readers re-read the description carefully, however, they come across some ambiguous points. First, readers may question the narrator's reliability⁴¹ when they read the narrator's voice describing Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil, since readers are totally dependent on the narrator's voice for the description of Job as a perfectly pious man.

The narrator simply introduces Job as a perfect man without providing any information to explicate just how Job can be evaluated as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. In the Hebrew Bible, the attributes of "blamelessness,"⁴² "uprightness,"⁴³ "fearing God"⁴⁴ and "turning away from evil"⁴⁵ are "familiar in proverbial wisdom and in the Psalms"⁴⁶ and are "all typically sapiential."⁴⁷ Thus, when readers read the narrator using these words, they may receive an impression of Job as a perfectly wise man who embodies complete understanding.

The idea of Job as a perfectly pious and wise man may induce readers to suspect the narrator's utterance because the description is unprecedented.⁴⁸ There hardly exists any other character that is blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil in the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ The translation is mine.

⁴¹ For more information about the narrator's unreliability, please refer to J.W. Watts, "The Unreliable Narrator of Job," in *The Whirlwind: Essays on Job, Hermeneutics and Theology in Memory of Jane Morse*, ed. S.L. Cook, C.L. Patton and J.W. Watts, JSOTSup 336 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 168–80.

⁴² Pss. 7:9; 25:21; 26:1, 11; 37:37; 64:5; Prov. 2:7, 21; 10:9; 13:6; 20:7; 28:10.

⁴³ Pss. 25:8; 32:11; 33:1; 37:37; Prov. 2:7–8, 21; 28:10.

⁴⁴ Job 28:28; Pss. 25:14; 33:18; Prov. 2:5–6; 3:7–8; 14:16; 16:17.

⁴⁵ Job 28:28; Pss. 34:15 [14]; 37:27; Prov. 3:7; 4:25; 13:19; 14:16; 16:6, 17.

⁴⁶ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 11–12.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁸ Watts ("The Unreliable Narrator of Job," 175) states that unrealistic elements strengthen the idea of the narrator as unreliable and that divine speeches in 38–41 further support the idea of the unreliable narrator because divine speeches deny a human the ability to tell any such story reliably.

⁴⁹ It is very rare that all four characteristics are used in one place. Usually, only two out of four attributes in the prologue are introduced in the Hebrew Bible (Pss. 25:21; 32:22; 33:1; 37:37; Prov. 2:7; 3:7; 14:2, 16).

Thus, readers may ponder whether they should draw a different implication from this description. Is the narrator even attempting to give a reliable description of Job which the reader must take on trust, or is there another sort of communicative transaction going on?

This phenomenon can be better understood by looking at Paul Grice's four maxims⁵⁰ which set out a speaker's obligations for successful communication. According to these four maxims, a speaker must adhere to the following rules in order to transmit information effectively. First, a speaker must make his or her contribution as informative as is required and not more informative than is required. Second, a speaker must make his or her contribution one that is true and does not say that for which he or she lacks adequate evidence or what he or she believes to be false. Third, a speaker must be relevant by being perspicuous, avoiding obscurity of expression, avoiding ambiguity, being brief and being orderly. If the audience perceives the speaker as breaching any one of these rules, they may read the speaker's implication to be such that he/she is deliberately intending to put over a meaning/s that is/are different to that/those normatively drawn from the semantic range applicable to the vocabulary or grammar used.

Based upon the Gricean maxims, the reader may conclude that the narrator's description of Job as a perfect and wise man violates the first and second of these rules. The narrator contributes more information on Job's piety than is required, making the description unrealistic and over-exaggerated and does not supply adequate evidence for Job's piety. Due to the narrator's violation of the first two rules, readers may perceive that the narrator's intention is something other than the simple communication of information.

What could the narrator's intended implication in the voice be? My contention is that the narrator may intend his words in 1:1 to be taken as puzzles or conundrums rather than as a lucid definition of Job. Rather than claiming that a man is "perfect," the narrator raises what will be the question which is debated so extensively in *Job*: can a "man" be "perfect"?

In 1:1, the narrator begins with an *unfinalized* Job without any clear information or definition of Job in order to open time and space for readers to participate actively in forming an adequate definition of Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. If the narrator

⁵⁰ Paul Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 26–27.

had provided a final definition of Job in his or her first utterances, there would be no need for Job in the rest of the prologue and dialogue because, according to Bakhtin, only when characters are incomplete and unfinalized, are they 'alive' to act and speak.⁵¹

Second, there is another question concerning the relationship between Job's piety and his possessions, including his children. While readers read the clauses about Job's possessions along with his piety, several questions may come to mind. Do all clauses directly and independently portray Job's identity or do some clauses function to complement other clauses? Particularly, in the relationship between the clause about Job's character and Job's possessions, readers may question whether or not the one causes the other.

Almost all scholars share a consensus over the causal relationship or nexus between Job's piety and his property. Newsom says of this first utterance:

The immediate foregrounding of a character and his virtues (cf. Tob 1:3) establishes the offer of a story that attempts to do us good by providing an answer to the question "Whom do I want to be like?" The sequenced description, which moves from good character to large family, great wealth, and high reputation, also suggests that the story intends to recommend and reconfirm the cultural assumption that virtue finds a reward in prosperity. Our desires to do good and to experience good are succinctly elicited by the text.⁵²

However, some scholars such as Alan Cooper offer a different opinion. Cooper in his article suggests:

The statements about Job's prosperity might also be *symmetrically* related to those about his piety, in no temporal or causal relationship (that is, the *waw* means 'and'—no more, no less). The causal nexus between Job's piety and his prosperity, in other words, is a mere *inference* drawn by the reader of the text. The reader who draws this inference is not elucidating what is necessarily implied by the text, but revealing what he or she presupposes the relationship between piety and prosperity to be . . .⁵³

According to Cooper, the function of the "ו" merely indicates a symmetrical connection between the previous and the latter clauses and implies nothing more or less than "and." He continues to explain the reason why

⁵¹ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 13; Webb, *Mark at the Threshold*, 20.

⁵² Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 52.

⁵³ Alan Cooper, "Reading and Misreading the Prologue of Job," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 46 (1990): 69. The emphases are original.

readers read the passage as a causal nexus. According to him, the reason is readers' inference rather than the narrator's implication. Cooper's interpretation presupposes that the readers' inference is fixed in the idea of an act-consequence relationship, which can be understood as a form of retribution theology found in Deuteronomy⁵⁴ and in the Deuteronomistic History;⁵⁵ readers therefore understand the relationship between piety and prosperity according to this act-consequence relationship. However, this analysis deals with the readers' inference in only one way and does not allow for any other possible understandings of the relationship on the part of readers.

Cooper could have mentioned another possible intertext which provides a schema for the relationship of act-consequence. Job's readers might also be familiar with the creation story in Genesis.⁵⁶ The first man is blessed by God in Genesis 1:28. Before the first man does anything, God blesses him with the prospect of multiple children and gives him dominion over all living creatures. Actually, in this case, readers may read God's benedictions as stipulations to be fulfilled rather than blessings to be earned. If readers with this kind of understanding were to read the first scene of the prologue of *Job*, they may understand Job's perfect prosperity and children as the result of fulfilled stipulations rather than simple blessings. Then, Job's perfect piety could be construed as a reward for his fulfilment of the stipulations. Thus, the order in the relationship between Job's piety and prosperity is reversed.

The purpose of this section is to show how the narrator develops the ambiguities in the reading of the utterance, not to determine whether or not the relationship between Job's piety and prosperity is an act-consequence relationship. The point of the claim about Job's perfect piety is not to define the act-consequence relationship between his piety and prosperity, but rather to provide the basis for readers to observe how other characters read the utterance and so to spur them on to create Job's identity by hearing/reading the voices in the prologue.

⁵⁴ Deut. 4:40; 5:10, 6:1-3; 7:4, 12-13; 8:6-13; 28:1-13, 15-48; 30:11-20.

⁵⁵ Josh. 1:7-8; 23:6-16; 2 Sam. 22:21-28; 1 Kings 2:3; 8:31-36.

⁵⁶ There are some articles that examine the similarities between the creation story in Genesis and the book of *Job*. Cf. David Shepherd, "Strike his bone and his flesh': Reading Job from the Beginning," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (2008): 81-97; Sam Meier, "Job 1-2: a reflection of Genesis 1-3," *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989): 183-93; M. Fishbane, "Jeremiah IV 23-26 and Job III 3-13: A Recovered Use of the Creation Pattern," *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 151-67; W. Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (GN 2,23a)," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 32 (1970): 532-42.

Thirdly, how did Job become the greatest man of all of the people of the East (1:3)? Is it Job's perfect piety and prosperity that makes him the greatest or of greater than all of the people of the East? Even if it is, then that still leaves the question as to what it means that Job was the greatest or greater than all of the people of the East. Does the narrator intend to imply that Job's piety and prosperity bring him only a fine reputation or superior advantages? Or could s/he be implying that those distinctive characteristics bring him greater disadvantages, worries or anxieties than any other person in the land of the East? Is this a blessing or a curse? Careful readers may raise such questions because Job's speech in verse 5 gives voice to his anxiety about his children's purity.⁵⁷ Perfect piety and prosperity may be a burden for Job to maintain.

The fourth ambiguity in the narrator's description of Job concerns Job's children's seven-day-cycle of feasts and Job's burnt offerings for his children (1:4–5a). Although Job has a lot of possessions, the narrator does not give any inkling that Job enjoys what he has. According to the narrator, what Job does habitually is to sanctify his children after the seven-day-cycle of feasts by offering burnt offerings (1:5c). The characters that eat and drink and are satisfied on all days are his children rather than Job himself, according to the narrator (1:4–5). This utterance provokes readers to think about the narrator's description of Job's piety: elsewhere the biblical position is that those who are blameless and upright, who fear God and turn away from evil will eat the fruit of their labor and will be satisfied.⁵⁸ Job, however, is the only one not eating and is the only one who seems anxious about sin. Again, how straightforward is the narrator being in this case?

The conclusion must be that, in this first scene, the narrator's voice is not simply providing his or her own point of view or evaluative statement concerning Job, but, by introducing Job as a "man" who is in the land of Uz and is completely pious and has perfect possessions and children, seeks to leave his or her readers with questions, which will turn out to be at the heart of the development of the text. The narrator provides time and space for his or her readers to consider their own point of view concerning Job as a character. The purpose of the scene is to introduce readers to Job's *wonder* land and to meet various characters and hear their voices and to interact with them.

⁵⁷ We will explore Job's anxiety about his children further in the section 'Job's Voice.'

⁵⁸ Deut. 8:10; Ps. 128:1–4.

In 1:5, the narrator allows readers to hear Job's voice: "It may be that my children have sinned, and *brk*⁵⁹ God in their hearts" (כי אמר איוב אולי) (חטאו בני וברכו אלהים בלבבם). The ambiguity of the narrator's utterances outlined above coincides with Job's utterance/voice as readers seek to define Job's identity in the prologue. According to Bakhtin, Job's utterance has a dialogic relationship with the previous voice, that of the narrator. Specifically, Job's speech can be read as a response to the narrator's voice. Readers can hear how Job identifies himself in answer to the narrator's questions.

Readers see Job's response to the narrator's voice describing him as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil in his speech. He seems to define himself as a "man" who is a priest⁶⁰-king-like⁶¹ father with responsibility for his children's sin and for his children's hearts. However, there exist several ambiguities in Job's speech causing readers to doubt Job's self-identity as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil and as a priest-king-like father in his house.

The first ambiguity is caused by the unclear meaning of the relationship between his children's sin and their saying "*brk*" in verse 5. The "*kl*"-phrase indicates the reason for Job's offerings: "it may be that my children have sinned and *brk* God in their heart." Why does the event in which Job's children may have sinned and *brk* God make Job offer burnt-offerings?

⁵⁹ The chapter uses the word "*brk*" for the verb "ברך" without translation, because the meaning of the word is ambiguous. Many scholars read the meaning of the word as 'curse' according to the 'standard euphemism theory.' (Tod Linafelt, "The Undecidability of ברך in the Prologue to Job and Beyond," *Biblical Interpretation* 4 (1996): 157) However, the problem with the theory is that there is no specific rule for when the theory can be applied to the word. I read the word with a perlocutionary force as elaborated in 'speech act theory.' When God becomes an object of the verb "ברך" the meaning depends on how God as the listener receives the word. Job assumes that his children's word "*brk*" may be received as a pejorative word by God. For more information about the word, please, see Christopher Wright Mitchell, *The Meaning of BRK "To Bless" in the Old Testament* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1987) and Tod Linafelt, "The Undecidability of ברך," 154–72.

⁶⁰ It is not clear whether Job lived in a time and place where the idea of an established priesthood existed. However, at least it is clear that what he does for his children is priest-like. For this reason, I describe Job not as having a priestly image but a priest-like image.

⁶¹ Job's priest-king-like image can be supported by reading Melchizedek's image in Gen. 14:18–20. Genesis 14:18 clearly presents Melchizedek as king of Salem and a priest of the highest God. Readers may find similarities between the image of Job and of Melchizedek in Job 1:1–5. First, both Melchizedek and Job are introduced by place and without any ancestry. Melchizedek is king of Salem (מלך שלם) and Job is in the land of Uz. Second, both Melchizedek and Job bless the name of God. Melchizedek blesses El Elyon (ברוך אברם לאל) (עליון Gen. 14:19). Job blesses the name of the Lord (יהי שם יהוה מבורך Job 1:21).

To answer the question, most scholars interpret the word “*brk*” as a euphemism for the word ‘curse.’⁶² If this were the case, then how would Job understand the relationship between sin and the action of cursing? Does Job understand his children’s act of cursing God as the sin or his children’s cursing God and sinning as two separate acts?⁶³ On the other hand, if the word “*brk*” were taken literally,⁶⁴ how could blessing God be a sin or why was Job so anxious about his children’s blessing God after they had sinned? Readers may find it difficult to answer the questions from reading Job’s utterance in 1:5 because they do not know Job’s understanding of the word “*brk*” and have no way of knowing how Job perceives the relationship between his children’s sins and their act of *brk* God.

The second ambiguity is whether or not Job’s speech clearly reinforces the narrator’s description of his perfect piety and prosperity. If the narrator’s implied readers or modern readers are familiar with Psalm 128,⁶⁵ they will infer that those who fear God are happy and blessed. When they read Job’s speech with this reference, it is possible for readers to doubt whether Job is happy. Although he is a fearer of God in verse 1, his speech seems to show Job as an unhappy person. Readers may envision that Job seems to be very anxious because of his worry about his children’s behaviour during their feasts because of his use of the word “perhaps” or “what if” (אוֹלֵי). Ironically, his children’s happiness and blessings become Job’s anxieties and worries.

The third issue reinforces the narrator’s chronotopic description of Job as a “man” who is limited in space and knowledge in the chronotope. As such a man, it is not possible for Job to know what his children have in their hearts, unless his children directly confess to him or his servants report to him what his children have in their hearts. Since neither a

⁶² There is consensus among the major commentaries and scholars that the word is used euphemistically as ‘curse.’

⁶³ Michael Cheney (*Dust, Wind, and Agony: Character, Speech, and Genre in Job*, Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series 36 [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1994], 71–72) introduces possible functions of waw (ו) in the speech. One is as an exegetical waw and the other is as a relative waw. With the exegetical waw “the second clause specifies and modifies the first clause,” whereas with the relative waw the second clause is “taken as expressing an action which is subordinate to the action of the preceding verb.”

⁶⁴ The book refers to the interpretation of the word “*brk*” in a literal sense. We will discuss “*brk*” in more detail later.

⁶⁵ Ps. 128:1–4: “Happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways. You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.”

confession by his children nor a report from his servants exists in the text, Job has no way of finding out what is in his children's hearts in the scene. However, Job becomes anxious concerning his children's hearts, even though—or because—he cannot ascertain what is in their hearts. It is quite possible that his children have not “*brk*” God at all.

Although Job cannot read what is in his children's hearts, Job makes burnt offerings to sanctify his children because of his uncertainty.⁶⁶ The following analysis may help to explain Job's actions in 1:5:

	Children's Curse	No Curse by Children
Job's Offering of Sacrifice	No Trouble	No Trouble
No Offering of Sacrifice	<u>Trouble</u>	No Trouble

According to the above diagram, readers may read Job's act of offering burnt offerings as a safety net to cover the bases. If his children did not curse and sin against God, Job could offer sacrifices or not, but nothing would be lost by offering them. However, if his children had cursed and sinned against God, Job and they would definitely be in trouble if he did not offer sacrifices, so he offers them to evade trouble. Either way, Job is covered if he offers burnt offerings.

So, readers perceive Job's utterance in 1:5 as revealing an anxiety that has resulted from his inability to know his children's hearts. Thus, there is a further question as to how readers could test the narrator's utterance concerning Job's piety and integrity to read Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. If Job himself cannot discern his children's hearts and has to deal with his lack of knowledge through burnt offerings, readers may be led to reflect on their inability to know what is in Job's heart. All they know is gained from reading Job's utterance which expresses his inability to comprehend his children's hearts. Thus, it is all the more necessary for readers to count on other characters' voices in the prologue to fill out the words defining Job as a perfect man.

⁶⁶ Job's assumption may foreshadow a guessing game between God and *hassatan* regarding whether or not Job would keep his integrity in the heavenly scene.

Concluding Remark

In the first scene, readers face two different voices. One is the narrator's. The other is Job's. The narrator's voice begins with an unclear definition of Job. The ambiguities about Job invite other voices to speak and particularly leave space for the hero's voice, which is Job's, to be heard first. First, Job took action to define himself as a "man" who is a father of his children who holds a priest-king-like authority. However, in its turn Job's speech delivers ambiguities to readers. The ambiguities in Job's speech afford opportunities for readers to articulate their own points of view about Job by interacting with other voices. Consequently, in the scene, the narrator calculatingly creates the unfinalized character's voice (Job's voice) to initiate the way in which other voices/reading voices⁶⁷ act to characterize Job by interacting with each other from the next scene on.

The Second Scene (Heavenly Realm: 1:6–12)

The second scene opens with the narrator's chronotopic words "the day (הַיּוֹם)" and "before the Lord (עַל יְהוָה)" and closes with the spatial phrase "from the presence of the Lord (מִפְנֵי יְהוָה)." In verse 6, the narrator depicts a new chronotope, God's chronotope, which is the heavenly realm. God's chronotope is an intrinsically interconnected time, when *hassatan* comes with the sons of God to present himself, and space where *hassatan* and the sons of God are in front of/face God or are in the presence of God.⁶⁸ In verse 6, "One day the heavenly beings (the sons of God) came to present themselves before the Lord," the temporal word "the day (הַיּוֹם)" and the spatial phrase "before the Lord (עַל יְהוָה)" portray the Lord's chronotope.

The chronotope characterizes the second scene in a different way from the first scene. The chronotopic formula opens the scene with the *coming* of the sons of God and *hassatan* to the Lord and closes with the leaving of *hassatan* from the face of God, while the chronotopic formula of the first scene starts with the motionless character of Job in the land of Uz and ends

⁶⁷ The book deals with characters' voices in *Job* as reading voices, since their voices are responses to the previous voices after hearing/reading (an)other's voice. I will develop this idea further by examining characters' voices below.

⁶⁸ Although God's presence is mentioned indirectly, readers clearly perceive God's presence, because the phrase "לְהַתִּיב עַל יְהוָה" implies God's presence. (cf. Weiss, *The Story of Job's Beginning*, 32)

with the implication of Job's unchanging life style in all days.⁶⁹ The chronotope of the first scene does not provide any chronotopic motif such as coming/leaving unlike the second scene. Moreover, while the chronotope of the first scene clearly depicts Job's time and space as vastly structured and repetitive, almost like 'clock-time,' where all his perfect piety and complete wealth have been imposed on him and he must accept them as they are, the second scene represents God's time and space as much less structured but organized around God's will.

In the first verse and the last verse of the second scene, the chronotope seems to highlight *hassatan's* movement. In the first verse, the chronotope introduces *hassatan's* coming before the Lord along with other sons of God and mentions *hassatan's* going out from the face of the Lord in verse 12. The narrator's utterance describing *hassatan's* movement in the chronotope clarifies the importance of *hassatan's* function, particularly his voice, in God's chronotope.

By presenting the heavenly scene with the sons of God and *hassatan* coming to the Lord, the narrator highlights the spatial distance and temporal separation between God and the other characters in the heavenly scene. The spatial and temporal structural differences in conjunction with the spatial distance and temporal separation between God and Job operate not only to separate the heavenly scene from the earthly scene but also to separate the characters that are in the earthly scene from us as readers, since the characters who are in the earthly scenes of *Job* can never overcome that spatial distance and temporal separation. We as readers can meet God and *hassatan* by reading the scene. So firstly, the chronotope of the heavenly scene separates the heavenly scene from the earthly scene. Job's separation from the chronotope of the heavenly scene prevents him from attaining information shared in the heavenly realm. The chronotope of the heavenly scene following on the chronotope of the first earthly scene circumscribes Job's knowledge in the prologue.

Second, God's chronotope separates Job from the readers of the book of *Job*. Job's reading of himself and our readings of Job are obviously different, since Job does not know what happens in God's chronotope, whereas readers know the words shared between God and *hassatan*. However, this does not mean that readers now have answers to the problems in the prologue. God's chronotope in turn provokes readers to ask questions. How

⁶⁹ In the prologue, Job has never seen (the face of) God, but later on Job sees God with his own eyes (42:5).

do the readers understand God's position in the heavenly scene? How do they understand God allowing *hassatan's* suggestion to smite Job?

The purpose of the narrator once again is not to answer these questions. The narrator in the scene seems not to be interested in delivering a narrative point of view on the characterization of God.⁷⁰ As with Job in the first scene, s/he evaluates neither God nor *hassatan*. Readers do not know what the narrator thinks about the characters of either God or *hassatan*. The information that the narrator provides to readers about God is that the chronotope of the heavenly scene defines God in a specific space and particular time.

Interestingly enough, the narrator does not use the word 'God' or his name as the subject of verse 6. Instead, the main subject and action to shape God's chronotope is "the sons of God (בני האלהים)" and their presenting of themselves to the Lord (להתיצב על יהוה). Without the temporal word "the day" indicating a specific time and the spatial words "to present to the Lord," God's chronotope could not be defined. God's character is set apart by the chronotope the description of which is contingent on his sons and their gathering together before him. The task of characterizing God belongs to readers. Readers have an opportunity to perceive God and *hassatan* in the scene through what they hear in God's and *hassatan's* voices.

God's speech begins with questions to *hassatan*: "Where have you come from?" (1:7) and "Have you considered my servant Job?" (1:8). What do these questions reveal to readers about God? Readers may conjecture several possible meanings from God's questions. First, God's questions are not intended to reveal God's character as being either omniscient or ignorant but rather intended to illustrate the plausibility of God's entering into dialogue with *hassatan*.

Specifically, God's question is presented as an anthropomorphic depiction of God who exists in a dialogic/intersubjective relationship with the other being in the scene, who is *hassatan*. God's dialogic relationship with *hassatan* introduces readers to the proposition that God's speeches must be perceived in interaction with *hassatan's* answers and speech in the scene.

In the scene, God's question instigates a discussion between God and *hassatan*. The specifics of the discussion concern their agreement or disagreement with regard to the description of Job's piety. God is in agreement

⁷⁰ Cheney, *Dust, Wind, and Agony*, 49.

with the narrator's description about Job's piety, which has been enunciated in the first scene (11–5), while *hassatan* disagrees with God's opinion.

The fact that there are both agreement and disagreement signals that the characters—God and *hassatan*—are in a dialogic relationship, since agreement and disagreement are both dialogic.⁷¹ Further, *hassatan's* disagreement with God's speech about Job shows that God's speech is an utterance, which includes a dialogic element, rather than being authoritative, absolute, privileged or finalized discourse.⁷² Subsequently, God's anthropomorphic depiction as a being that exists within a dialogic relationship with another character—*hassatan*—leads readers to follow this unexpected characteristic of God in the scene.

When readers set about determining God's character, this unexpected characteristic creates a loophole⁷³ helping God to escape from readers' presumption/presupposition⁷⁴ in determining His character.⁷⁵ The text does not allow readers to determine and finalize God's character rather it intends to leave God's character in the prologue open and *unfinalized*.⁷⁶

God's speeches following the questions in verses 7 and 8 are God's evaluation of Job in verse 8 and His permission for *hassatan's* to test Job in

⁷¹ Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 132; Carol Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth," *The Journal of Religion* 76/2, (1996): 300.

⁷² Webb (*Mark at the Threshold*, 19) defines Bakhtin's Dialogism in the following way, "Dialogisation occurs when a word, discourse, language or culture becomes relativised, and de-privileged. Authoritative or absolute discourse does not permit dialogisation."

⁷³ Bakhtin (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 233) comments, "A loophole is the retention for oneself of the possibility for altering the ultimate, final meaning of one's own words. If a word retains such a loophole this must inevitably be reflected in its structure. This potential other meaning, that is, the loophole left open, accompanies the word like a shadow. Judged by its meaning alone, the word with a loophole should be an ultimate word and does present itself as such, but in fact it is only the penultimate word and places after itself only a conditional, not a final, period."

⁷⁴ Readers' assumption about God is due to the name used for God, which is the Lord (יהוה). The name 'YHWH' in the Hebrew Bible presents God as the one who created heaven and earth (Gen. 2:4), man and woman (Gen. 2:7, 18) and who knows the human heart (Gen. 8:21). Cf. G.H. Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh: The Divine Name in the Bible* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1975).

⁷⁵ The second scene specifically uses the tetragrammaton (יהוה) as God's name. The name (יהוה) may easily make readers determine God's characteristics in the scene. However, the Lord's speeches actually provide a loophole to escape from readers' act of determination. For the function of the tetragrammaton in the Hebrew Bible, please see Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh*.

⁷⁶ Cf. Webb (*Mark at the Threshold*, 26) states that the term "Son of Man" is used as a loophole in the book of Mark to leave open and unfinalized the ultimate meaning of "Christology" in the book.

verse 12. Verse 8 is almost identical to the narrator's presentation of Job in verses 1–3 except that God replaces the sentence “this man was the greatest of all the people of the East” with the sentence “there is none like him in the earth” and omits the description of Job's possessions and children.

By repeating the narrator's words about Job, God strengthens the view that Job is a man who is perfectly pious. However, readers may raise questions about the differences between God's utterance and the narrator's utterance. The first difference can be seen as an interpretative comment on the narrator's voice, “this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.” While the narrator compares Job to the people of the east, God compares him to everyone on the earth. Specifically, by using the clause “there is no one like him in the earth (אֵין כְּמֹהוּ בָאָרֶץ)” in verse 8, God's voice lifts Job up to God's level.⁷⁷ By elevating Job to the divine level,⁷⁸ God singles Job out from all those who are on the earth. According to God, there is no one who is better than Job on the earth, which is his own sphere. Consequently, God's utterance “there is none like him on the earth” provokes *hassatan* to ask the question “Does Job fear God for nothing or without reason?”

There may be two reasons to explain why *hassatan* replies in such way. First, upon hearing the utterance, *hassatan* might think that God regards Job as being better than *hassatan*. Readers are aware that *hassatan* had been on the earth before he came to God. Importantly, *hassatan* is the only character who seems to be able to move between the heavenly and the earthly realms and who thus can operate in both chronotopes in this chapter. This is made explicit through his answer in verse 7 to God's question as to where he had come from: “From going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it.” Therefore, when *hassatan* hears the speech, he might think that even he himself is being included as an earthly being and Job is being elevated to a higher level than him.

Second, simply put, *hassatan* is challenging God's perception of Job. *Hassatan's* response may include a presupposition that God's evaluation of Job comes from his misinterpretation of Job's capabilities as a man,

⁷⁷ The Hebrew Bible uses a similar clause to define Saul in 1 Sam. 10:24. (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 24) However, the clause used in 1 Sam. 10:24 is different from that in Job 1:8. The clause used to indicate Saul in 1 Sam. 10:24 compares Saul to the people who live in a certain limited area, but the clause in Job 1:8 compares Job with all beings on the earth. Job 1:8 broadens the comparison. There is no one comparable with Job on earth at all.

⁷⁸ Job is elevated to the level of a divine in comparison to other earthly beings, not to heavenly beings.

since all men are flawed and vulnerable.⁷⁹ *Hassatan* may be implying, "Job is not the greatest, as You think!" So, there is not only *one* clear answer but *several possible* answers as to why God praises Job by saying "there is none like him on the earth" and *hassatan* replies to God with the words "Does Job fear God for nothing or without reason?"

The second difference is that God's interpretation of Job omits the description of Job's prosperity. God's speech reflects God's moral imagination about Job and his character. When God speaks only of Job's character and not his possessions, *hassatan* responds by bringing up the relationship of Job's character to his prosperity. Why does God exclude the reference to Job's material goods? Why, in turn, does *hassatan* broach the topic of the relationship between Job's character and his possessions? The answer may lie in the divergent contexts in which God and *hassatan*⁸⁰ read the narrator's general description about Job's piety and property.

Here we may borrow from Wing-Chi Ki's use of Gift Theory. Ki clearly states the differences between God and *hassatan* in these terms in her article.⁸¹ We will discuss *hassatan's* point of view below. As for God's point of view on the relationship between Job's character and his possessions, it extends beyond the communal concept of a gift.⁸² God considers His blessings to Job as a free or perfect gift which requires no paying back. Once the giver of a gift expects any repayment from the receiver, then the gift is no longer a gift but a debt.⁸³ Not only does God consider His blessings a gift, but God also perceives that Job may understand the blessings from God as a gift.⁸⁴

Another possible way to discern the different context of God's reading from *hassatan's* reading is that God may recognize that Job's prosperity is

⁷⁹ Human beings' vulnerability will be examined in detail in the friends' voices in chapter 4.

⁸⁰ *Hassatan's* reading of the relationship between Job's piety and his prosperity will be discussed in the section below on '*Hassatan's* Voice.'

⁸¹ Wing-Chi Ki, "Gift Theory and the Book of Job," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 723-49.

⁸² Ki, "Gift Theory and the Book of Job," 732-33.

⁸³ Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist approach to a gift supports the idea. When someone recognises a gift as a gift, the gift is no longer a gift but a debt. For a gift to be a gift, the gift cannot appear or be perceived of or received as a gift. (Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money* [Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992], 14, 16)

⁸⁴ According to Derrida's deconstructionist idea of a gift, if Job understands God's blessings as a gift, the blessings are not a gift but a debt. However, the chapter contends that God thinks that Job takes God's blessings as a gift, not that Job sees God's blessings as a gift. In other words, the chapter focuses on God's interpretation of Job's reading of the blessings not on Job's thoughts about the blessings. Actually, Job's thoughts on the blessings remain ambiguous.

the result of Job's fulfilment of stipulations from God. Job's prosperity is evidence of Job's blamelessness, uprightness, fearing of God and turning away from evil rather than remuneration for being blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. Due to these different contexts, God's reading of Job is distinctly different from *hassatan's* reading. In God's voice, readers can understand that God's position on Job is clear. God perceives and regards Job as His faithful servant.

Although God's position on Job seems clear and firm, it does not necessarily convince readers to accept God's position on Job as accurate because of the loophole created by the ambiguity in God's utterance. The scene suggests readers should wait until they hear Job's voice before they make a decision. God's last utterance in the speech clearly advocates the suggestion: "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon him put not forth your hand" (1:12). According to the utterance, God seems to agree with *hassatan* about testing Job. God's consensus with *hassatan* confuses readers and heightens their doubt in God's interpretation of Job's perfect piety and God's intention to confirm that His interpretation is correct.

Hassatan's character in the scene is especially indistinct. Who is *hassatan*? From *hassatan's* answer to God's question "Where have you come from?" readers may presuppose that *hassatan* was not in the heavenly council⁸⁵ until that specific time and place.⁸⁶ At the same time, according to God's question and *hassatan's* answer, readers may assume that there had been, at least for a time, a certain spatial distance between God and *hassatan* and *hassatan* had to leave the place where he was to present himself before God. *Hassatan* is required to make a movement such as *come* to overcome the spatial hiatus that existed between God and *hassatan* himself,⁸⁷ since *hassatan* could not present himself both on the earth and in the heavenly council simultaneously, according to verse 12.⁸⁸

Moreover, readers may believe that *hassatan* was usually on the earth and not in the heavenly council but may not understand how *hassatan*

⁸⁵ It is also not clear where the sons of God had been before they gathered together in the presence of God.

⁸⁶ The chapter will discuss more about *hassatan's* place and where he has been before he presents himself in the presence of God below, when we read *hassatan's* voice.

⁸⁷ Bakhtin (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 99) implies that a character's act such as *running* is required to overcome *spatial distance*. In this way, according to God's question "Where have you come from," readers may conjecture that there was a spatial distance between God and *hassatan* before *hassatan* came to God. To overcome the spatial distance between God and *hassatan*, *hassatan* must *leave* where he was before and *come* to God's presence to present himself.

⁸⁸ Cf. Job 2:7. *hassatan* must leave the presence of God to come to touch Job. *Hassatan* has the temporal separation between God and himself and Job and himself.

could come to God in the heavenly council. Since *hassatan* hovers around the earth, could he be a different kind of being than the other sons of God? He has an ambivalent nature because he can exist both on the earth and in the heavenly council. However, in the scene, readers must concede that *hassatan* is the only character who can journey between the heavenly and earthly scenes. This characteristic of *hassatan* may help readers to understand that it is likely that *hassatan* executes what God and *hassatan* discuss in the heavenly council on the earth.

Since a unique point of view is expressed from a unique temporal spatial position,⁸⁹ *hassatan* holds a unique perspective/point of view of Job from God, because he can move between the heaven and the earth. *Hassatan's* distinctively different point of view about Job is enunciated in his speech, which is a response to God's question and adumbration about Job:

Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. (Job 1:8)

In response to God's voice, *hassatan* begins his answers also with questions: "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have you not put a fence around him and his house and all that he has on every side?" *Hassatan* proceeds to contend that Job became a perfect pious man because he knows that God has blessed the work of his hands and increased his possessions in the land and put a fence⁹⁰ around him, his possessions and his children.⁹¹ As a result, *hassatan* challenges God to remove His hand and take away everything that Job has and, then, *hassatan* assures God, Job will *brk* God.

Hassatan's first question "Does Job fear God for nothing?" might be shaped from two possible readings by *hassatan* of a) God's assessment of Job in the previous verse (verse 8), and, b) the narrator's assessment of Job from verses 1–3. *Hassatan* uses the question to challenge God's assessment or interpretation of Job in the previous verse. The question is a revelation of *hassatan's* hermeneutics of suspicion against God's interpretation of Job rather than against Job's piety.

⁸⁹ Lahteenmaki, "On Meaning and Understanding," 86.

⁹⁰ The fence in the prologue is perceived by *hassatan* as God's protection, but it is also understood as a boundary and confinement in which Job is held captive by God. We will examine how Job understands God's fence as a confinement rather than protection in the section entitled 'Job's Voice.'

⁹¹ It is plausible that *hassatan* understands Job's offering of burnt offering in the first scene as an act of keeping his children in the fence around him and his children.

The first possible reading of *hassatan's* hermeneutics of suspicion is that *hassatan's* question "Does Job fear God for nothing?" may be questioning God's implication in the words.⁹² God uses the same words as used in the narrator's voice in verse 1. As aforementioned, God reproduces the narrator's utterance in His context thereby altering it.⁹³ In the reproduction of the utterance by God, *hassatan* may not be able to understand God's implication, because *hassatan* cannot read the context⁹⁴ in which God influences and alters the narrator's utterance.

Hassatan does not receive the words without trying to make sense⁹⁵ of them. *Hassatan* may expect to hear from God in what context God uses the words "blameless," "upright," "a fearer of God" and "a shunner from evil." *Hassatan* could be eager to discover what God's conception of such words is by finding out what the opposite of these words would be⁹⁶ or he may want to receive God's unique perspective or point of view concerning Job's piety in His chronotope.⁹⁷ Therefore, *hassatan's* question "Does Job

⁹² As it turns out, the question reflects *hassatan's* limited reading competence. We will discuss this matter in detail later.

⁹³ It could be called a passive double-voiced discourse. Charles William Miller mentions, "...if someone else's speech is reproduced within an utterance, but given an intention different than it was meant to have originally, Bakhtin terms this passive double-voiced discourse" (Charles William Miller, "Reading Voices: Personification, Dialogism, and the Reader of Lamentations 1," *Biblical Interpretation* 9 (2001): 396). In this passive double-voiced discourse, the narrator validates God by reproducing his or her speech in God's own utterance to display God's different point of view. This process makes it possible for God's utterance to be an independent voice in the prologue.

⁹⁴ According to Bakhtin, in the dialogical view, understanding would be actualized in concrete social contexts, which are the dialogical relationship of a speaker with a listener. (Lahteenmaki, "On Meaning and Understanding," 79)

⁹⁵ Bakhtin distinguishes meaning from sense. According to Bakhtin, *meaning* "refers to the *possible* or *potential* role of a linguistic expression in an utterance, whereas *sense* stands for the actual meaning of an utterance in some given context." (Lahteenmaki, "On Meaning and Understanding," 79; Lahteenmaki paraphrases the idea from Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 82–83) Also, in a similar way, Todorov distinguishes signification or significance from meaning (*sense*). (Todorov, *Symbolisme et Interprétation*, 9–10)

⁹⁶ *Hassatan's* question could be considered to be a natural reaction for the following reason: "when someone asks us to explain the meaning of a linguistic expression, the only thing we can do is to provide him with different uses of the given expression that from our point of view seem to be more or less typical of it. This would suggest that the only evidence we can rely on when trying to explicate the meaning of a linguistic expression comes from the *actual uses of the expression* that we have come across in various speech events." (Lahteenmaki, "On Meaning and Understanding," 82. The emphasis is added).

⁹⁷ God's utterance has been formed from the unique spatio-temporal position from which God acts (Lahteenmaki, "On Meaning and Understanding," 86).

fear God for nothing?" is designed to ascertain what it is that God understands when He uses those particular words.

A second possible reading emerges from the differences between God's utterance and the narrator's utterance in verses 1–3. *Hassatan* may recognize the differences between God's interpretation of Job and the narrator's interpretation of Job, since God comments on Job's superiority but omits the relationship of Job's piety to his prosperity, whereas *hassatan* is interested in pointing out the link between his piety and prosperity. In *hassatan's* hermeneutics of suspicion, *hassatan* reflects his/her own reading of the relationship between Job's piety and prosperity.

Unlike God, however, the narrator makes a clear connection between Job's piety and prosperity by using the conjunction "i." Although the narrator is not sure of the nature of the connection between Job's piety and his prosperity in his/her own utterance/voice, *hassatan* perceives the link between Job's piety and his prosperity to be causal and reflects this understanding of the link in his utterance. According to *hassatan's* reading, Job's piety has a direct correlation to his prosperity.⁹⁸ Why does *hassatan* read the narrator's description of Job's piety and prosperity as indicating the two components of an act-consequence relationship? The answer may be found by re-examining 'Gift Theory' from *hassatan's* perspective.⁹⁹

If God considers the prosperity as a free gift, then *hassatan* considers the prosperity also as a debt on Job's part, because *hassatan* interprets the relationship between God and Job as that of a benefactor to a beneficiary. *Hassatan's* perception of the relationship between God and Job as that of benefactor and beneficiary stems from *hassatan's* reading of Job's offering of the burnt offerings and Job's utterance in verse 5. *Hassatan* reads Job's act of offering the burnt offerings as Job's offerings for his children's safety and blessings, demonstrating his gratitude to God. *Hassatan's* reading assures him that Job may view his relationship with God as that of benefactor and beneficiary. Therefore, *hassatan* is able to declare confidently that Job will *brk* God when he loses all his possessions.

Hassatan's interpretation of Job's relationship with God as a benefactor-beneficiary relationship leads him to ask the following question and make the subsequent statement:

⁹⁸ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 25.

⁹⁹ See 52 n. 81.

Have you not put a fence around him and his house and all that he has on every side? You have *brk* the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. (Job 1:10)

Readers may find this speech by *hassatan* very interesting.

First, in the question, *hassatan* uses the word “שֹׁכֵת” to express God’s intervention in Job’s life and to insinuate that God’s intervention makes him rich. The reason for this may be found in *hassatan*’s readings of Job “who is in the land of Uz” and God’s speech about Job, which claims Job is His servant. The spatial words “in the land of Uz (בְּאֶרֶץ עֻז)” force *hassatan* to try to make sense of Job. That Job is “in the land of Uz” offers significance to *hassatan* in that the land of Uz may be providing Job with a safe place to reside. Job is the only one uniquely introduced as being in the land of Uz. The spatial word leads *hassatan* to think of the word “שֹׁכֵת,” which represents God’s protection. To *hassatan*, Job is only prosperous because he is in the land of Uz and fully protected by God.

Second, via the question, *hassatan* is trying to read and make sense of God’s statement about Job: “For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” In the question, *hassatan* clearly demonstrates his understanding of the relationship between Job’s piety and his prosperity. *Hassatan*’s moral imagination or worldview about Job’s piety is that the prosperity given by God is the reason for Job’s piety and that without it, it would be impossible for Job to remain pious.

Third, in the statement, *hassatan* uses the word “*brk*.” The word “*brk*” is used twice in *hassatan*’s speech/utterance. In the first case, *hassatan* uses it to describe the blessings Job has received from God. In the second case, *hassatan* employs it as the word he expects to be Job’s reaction to his world collapsing. Why does *hassatan* use the same word to convey both implications?

In order to address this question, we as readers may conjecture several possible readings of *hassatan*’s utterance. The first possible reading is that the ‘standard euphemism theory’¹⁰⁰ be applied to the latter utterance. The first utterance uses the word “*brk*” in a literal sense, since the subject is God and the object or beneficiary of God’s blessing is Job. However, in the second utterance, the word “*brk*” is perceived as a euphemism to mean ‘to curse’. Since the subject of the curse is Job and the object of the curse is God, it is not feasible for the word ‘curse’ to have God as the object.

¹⁰⁰ See 44 n. 59.

However, there is a problem with the theory. There is no specific rule outlining when readers can apply the euphemism theory to this word.

Hence, we need to posit alternative readings to make sense of *hassatan*'s use of the word "*brk*" as signalling the destruction of Job's piety in his/her second utterance. As alternatives, we might consider two possible readings. One is to understand the use of the word "*brk*" in both of *hassatan*'s utterances by applying illocutionary and perlocutionary force from 'Speech Act' theory.¹⁰¹ Another alternative is to deal with the word "*brk*" in both utterances in a literal sense.

The first alternative reading is to understand *hassatan*'s use of the word "*brk*" in the context of 'speech act' theory. Actually, it is important to consider both illocutionary force and perlocutionary force in understanding the word "*brk*," as Christopher Wright Mitchell says:

The fact that oral blessings are illocutionary utterances is quite important for understanding their effectiveness and how they are accomplished. Many erroneous conclusions about blessing have been drawn because the illocutionary force of blessings has been misunderstood. The perlocutionary force of blessings is also extremely important for a proper understanding of what blessing means. The significance of some blessings lies primarily in their perlocutionary force.¹⁰²

The illocutionary force of *hassatan*'s word "*brk*" in the first utterance evinces *hassatan*'s perception of Job's prosperity as God-given bliss/blessings. *Hassatan* implies God's illocutionary act in using the word. However, in the second utterance, *hassatan* understands the word "*brk*" from the point of view of perlocutionary force. In other words, *hassatan* considers the impact of the word on his and Job's addressee, who is God: How does God feel when He hears the word "*brk*" from Job's mouth? Therefore, in the second utterance, the significance for the word "*brk*" is not in Job speaking the word (illocutionary force) but in how God receives the word (perlocutionary force). According to the perlocutionary force of the word,

¹⁰¹ J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955*, 2nd ed., ed. J.O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976). For more information of speech act theory in Biblical studies, please see Hugh C. White, "Introduction: Speech Act Theory and Literary Criticism," *Semeia* 41 (1988): 1–24; White, "The Value of Speech Act Theory for Old Testament Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 41 (1988): 41–66; Michael Hancher, "Performative Utterance, the Word of God, and the Death of the Author," *Semeia* 41 (1998): 27–40; Daniel Patte, "Speech Act Theory and Biblical Exegesis," *Semeia* 41 (1998): 85–102.

¹⁰² Mitchell, *The Meaning of BRK "To Bless"*, 8.

hassatan means that God would receive the word “*brk*” from Job’s voice as an affront.¹⁰³

The second alternative is to read the word in a literal sense in both utterances. There is no problem understanding the word “*brk*” literally in *hassatan*’s first utterance. However, it is difficult to read the word “*brk*” literally in *hassatan*’s suggestion to God (*Job* 1:11). In this speech, *hassatan* implies that Job’s saying “*brk*” to God indicates Job’s loss of piety. In other words, Job’s loss of piety provokes Job to say “*brk*” or to ‘bless’ God. According to *hassatan*’s reading of Job, *hassatan* perceives that Job displays his pious character through the act of offering the burnt offerings to God for his children’s purification (cf. 1:5). Therefore, according to *hassatan*’s logical order, when Job sees that he is losing all his possessions and children, Job may acknowledge that he is losing his opportunity to keep and display his piety because the means to sustain his rhythmic and pious life have disintegrated.

According to *hassatan*’s theory, Job understands himself as one who still remains in the chronotope of the first scene and is attempting to reconstruct his piety and rhythmic life. Eventually, according to *hassatan*, Job pronounces the word “*brk*” or ‘bless’ to God in order to reconstruct his piety. Speaking the word “*brk*” to God is the only way left for Job, once everything is gone, to prove that he is still as pious now as he was in the first scene.

Consequently, *hassatan*’s use of the same word, “*brk*,” in the two different/opposing meanings causes ambiguity in understanding *hassatan*’s implication. Does *hassatan* intentionally use the same word in two different meanings to present the ambiguities of the voices in the prologue? If the answer is affirmative, how does *hassatan*’s implication affect readers’ readings of the next scene? Again, the narrator wants to see how readers act in reading the next scene based upon the ambiguities of the word “*brk*.”

Concluding Remarks

In the second scene, we as readers encounter three voices: the narrator’s, God’s and *hassatan*’s. The narrator does not elaborate on Job’s identity. The narrator’s voice enunciates God’s chronotope and the significance of

¹⁰³ For more information on the meaning of the word “BRK” and the ‘Speech Act Theory,’ please see Mitchell, *The meaning of BRK “To Bless”*, 7–8.

hassatan's voice, thereby allowing God's and *hassatan's* voices to speak. God's and *hassatan's* voices present their idea of Job. However, their voices are not enough for readers to characterize them in the scene, since their voices have loopholes which unfinalize each character. As unfinalized characters, both God and *hassatan* fail to provide finalized words to prove whether or not Job is a perfectly pious man. Instead, the loophole in God's nature and ambiguities in both God's voice and *hassatan's* voice make it possible for readers to perceive that both God and *hassatan* agree with each other on the idea of testing Job and wait to hear Job's voice to see whether or not he will *brk* God.

The Third Scene (Earthly Realm: 1:13–22)

As is typical in the prologue, readers usually hear the narrator's voice first as a scene shifts. Here, again, not only the scene but the chronotope shifts back to the earthly realm. In this scene, the narrator's voice introduces three elements: the setting of the scene, the messengers who deliver the reports of the tragic events and Job's responses to the tragic events. The narrator's voice introduces and sets the scene: "One day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house" (1:13). The narrator uses the temporal word "the day" (הַיּוֹם) and the spatial words "in the eldest brother's house" in the speech to introduce the earthly scene.

Actually, the formation of the narrator's first utterance in the third scene is analogous to that of the narrator's first utterance in the second scene. Both utterances include the temporal word "the day" and the spatial words indicating a specific place where time "the day" is visualised. However, the presentations of the chronotopes in both scenes are different.

Just as the narrator employs temporal and spatial words to depict the interruption of the second scene, which is the heavenly scene, into the first scene, the narrator uses temporal and spatial words to distinguish the third scene from the first two scenes. The third scene is distinct from the second scene. Although verse 13, the first verse in the third scene, begins with exactly the same temporal word, "the day" (הַיּוֹם), as verse 6, it is clear that the chronotope designates a different time, because the differences in spatial words between the two scenes lead the reader to visualise the time in a different way.

The third scene is different from the first scene, even though the setting is the same. By using the temporal marker "the day," the narrator singles

out the third scene from the first scene. By singling out one day out of all Job's days in 1:5, the narrator implies that the third scene delivers different meanings or images to readers. The time when Job's children gather together in their eldest brother's house will not reflect the structure, regularity and predictability of Job's life any more. The narrator invites readers to see how Job responds to the tragic events happening to him by breaching his rhythmic life.¹⁰⁴

Second, the narrator describes how the messages of the tragic events are delivered to Job by introducing the arrival of each messenger. The narrator uses time and space in a special way to introduce the messengers. The messengers come to Job without any specified time interval and with no mention of where they came from except hints concerning what the messengers did, such as shepherding and serving Job's children. The narrator emphasizes that Job's four messengers come to Job at the same time and from an undetermined place.

The narrator is not interested in the time and space of the messengers but in the simultaneity of their voices when they deliver their messages. In the scene, the narrator focuses exclusively on their utterances. By representing the four messengers' simultaneous appearance to Job, the narrator may intend to depict an image of layers of tragic news being poured out to Job at the same time. In so doing, s/he draws readers' attention to how Job responds to the messages.

Once again, however, the very need for messengers emphasizes Job's limitations and his lack of knowledge. He cannot know what is happening to his possessions, or even his children, all the time as he cannot be everywhere at once. He relies on the utterances of others, with the ever-present possibility that they may be mistaken or deceitful, or that he may not understand them.

The intention of the narrator is also clarified by reading his/her word choice. The narrator uses the word "messenger" (מַלְאֲךְ) rather than, for instance, "young man" or "servant" (נָעַר). It is clear that each messenger is one of his servants. In each messenger's speech the word "servants" (נָעָרִים) is used (verses 15, 16, 17, 19). Again, by focussing on this specific function and telling us nothing else about the message bearers, the narrator intends to direct the readers' attention to the messages themselves.

¹⁰⁴ Newsom explains that readers know the issue is whether or not Job will curse God to his face on this day. (Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 57)

Third, in verse 20, the narrator describes Job's response to the messages as follows: "Then Job arose, tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshipped." In contrast to the exclusive focus on the voices of the messengers, here the narrator focuses on Job's body and his actions.¹⁰⁵

The very first responses are expressed by Job's motion in rising, tearing his robe, shaving his head, falling down on the ground and worshipping. These responses would have been impossible without Job's body. The description of Job's body and its motion is important in the scene just as Job's regularity and piety in verse 5 are contingent on his actions, such as rising early in the morning and the offering of the burnt offerings for his children. Just as s/he demonstrates Job's regularity and pious life through his physical movement in the first scene, the narrator also avers Job's regularity and piety through his bodily actions in the third scene.

How do Job's actions evince his regularity and piety in the third scene? First, there is a consensus among scholars that Job's actions depict mourning rites.¹⁰⁶ When Job hears the messages, Job mourns the death of his servants and particularly his children. As the head of his household, Job fulfils his responsibility or answerability, according to Bakhtin's terminology. By conducting himself in a traditional way, he clearly displays the fact that he is still seeking to maintain order in his life.

Second, Job's maintaining of his piety is verified by the narrator's explicit description of Job worshipping God. Through the actions of maintaining the regularity in his life, Job worships God to prove the existence of his piety. Worship is necessary to maintain a proper relationship with God.¹⁰⁷ According to Mitchell, when the *baruk* formula takes God as an object, the act of *baruk* is praising rather than benefiting God, since it is impossible for men to benefit God. Mitchell continues by claiming that the *baruk* formula

¹⁰⁵ Job's body plays a significant role in determining Job's identity as a man in Job's voice and the three friends' voices. We will examine how Job's body plays its role in both Job's voice and the three friends' voices in the next two chapters (chapters 3 and 4).

¹⁰⁶ For more information that tearing the robe, shaving the head and falling down on the ground are mourning rites, please see Xuan Huong Thi Pham, *Mourning in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 13–36.

¹⁰⁷ Mitchell (*The Meaning of BRK "To Bless"*, 135, 139) proclaims, "Praise is necessary to maintain a proper relationship to God" and sees the act of praising God as part of the worship.

becomes a statement of faith or trust in God when it is accompanied by acts of worship (Genesis 24:26–27; Exodus 18:10–12). . . . The doxological use of *baruk* and the *piel* with God as object do express faith in God.¹⁰⁸

Then what kind of faith does Job have in God? According to Erhard S. Gerstenberger,

Praises to deities across ancient Near Eastern cultures and religions are meant to “exalt,” “make great,” “lift up,” “glorify” the gods addressed. That means that a real transfer of power, from the hymn-singer to the deity, is taking place . . . hymnic praise, strengthens the deity. . . . The thanksgiving of Jonah inside the big fish . . . could signify powerful motions to initiate the process of divine rescue¹⁰⁹

Job’s faith is in God’s power to rescue him from the tragic events. This faith is exemplified in the act of exalting God’s power. By exalting God’s power, Job proves himself a pious man.

Therefore, readers infer that Job can still maintain order and integrity, even after losing what he had, because his bodily actions are consistent with those he performed in the first scene. Then how do the messengers’ voices influence readers’ readings of Job’s identity?

The messengers’ voices sound as if they are simply delivering brute facts to Job. However, according to Bakhtin, all utterances are dialogic in nature, are responses and are shaped within each different genre, defined as the form-shaping ideology. Utterances have their own ideologies. Therefore, we need to read the messengers’ utterances not simply as reports of brute facts but as interpretative statements. In other words, because a speaker forms his or her speech with the knowledge of his or her audience and in expectation of their response, each piece of news is that messenger’s interpretation of an event and involves each messenger’s anticipation of Job’s responses.¹¹⁰

In the scene, readers hear four different messengers’ voices bringing four different messages to Job. The four different messages together portray the complete loss of his possessions to Job.¹¹¹ Yet the order of the reported destruction is the opposite of the order of the introduction of

¹⁰⁸ Mitchell, *The Meaning of BRK “To Bless,”* 156.

¹⁰⁹ Erhard S. Gerstenberger, “Praise in the Psalm of Death: The Dynamics of Hymn-Singing in Ancient Near Eastern Lament Ceremony,” in *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts*, ed. Nancy C. Lee and Carleen Mandolfo (Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 123–24.

¹¹⁰ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 91.

¹¹¹ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 30.

Job's possessions in the prologue. By putting the news of the death of his children last, the impact of the messages on Job is like that of a hammer. What do the messages imply to Job besides the information that Job has lost absolutely everything?

First, the messages delivered by the four messengers imply that Job's possessions are not blessings for Job. While the first three verses of the chapter, as we have discussed, do not determine whether or not his possessions are blessings for Job, verses 14 to 19 clearly determine that now his possessions have become curses to Job. If Job had not had such great possessions, he would not face such great suffering losing those great blessings.

In the same way, the messengers themselves become the instruments for Job's great suffering. According to verse 3, a great number of servants were part of what made Job the greatest of all the people of the East. However, in this scene, the messengers, who bring the bad news and who survive the rest of his servants, become the instruments that make Job miserable. In this way, all Job's possessions, including his servants, eventually become a curse that brings great suffering to Job.

Second, by reading the first and last messengers' speeches, readers can infer Job's perception of the messages. Only these two messengers include the background story before they report the tragic events. The background stories are similar. The first messenger tells Job, "The oxen were plowing and the asses grazing beside them..." and the last messenger says, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother..." The common scene from these two voices is that Job's animals and children gather together in each group to enjoy food. While they are enjoying their food, they are killed.

The messengers' utterances are double voiced. Ensuring that his children and his livestock have the security and supplies to enjoy food is the fulfilment of Job's responsibility as head of the household. Their deaths at this moment epitomize Job's failure to fulfil his responsibility to provide the time and space for them to enjoy food. On the other hand, their deaths now mean that Job himself has lost the time and space to fulfil his responsibility. The death of Job's children in their house means that Job's house, in the sense of his lineage and his possessions, has itself been destroyed. Not only Job's house but his ability to act as father and provider has been completely destroyed.¹¹²

¹¹² Mieke Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry: The Politics of Coherence in the Book of Judges* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1988), 172.

Third, the implication of the messages is that the relationship between God and Job has been destroyed. According to the second messenger, the second tragic event is the fire of God falling from the sky and burning up the sheep and the servants. Note that this message contains an interpretation: the messenger reads the fire falling down from the sky as the fire of God. The messenger may presume that God is behind all the tragic events. This perception may imply Job's breached relationship with God, since Bal always read "fire" as "the word, the instrument of 'rupture', of the breaking off of relations, and of 'coupure'—cutting: penetrating and dividing."¹¹³ Therefore, all messages about the tragic events may deliver the message of a shattered relationship between God and Job. Of course, the reader knows from the second scene that what is described as God's fire is being deployed at the behest of *hassatan*. Again, the information that the earthbound characters lack causes an ironic fusion. Is it God or *hassatan* who is responsible for this? No one on earth seems to refer to *hassatan*, although the reader knows not only that he is deputed by God for this role, but that he is the one character that can explicitly move between the two realms.

Fourth, the messages imply that Job, as head of the household, is responsible for his children's death, rather than either God or *hassatan*. The fourth messenger begins his report with an utterance similar to the narrator's voice in verse 13. "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house."¹¹⁴ This reminds Job (of course readers, too) of what he did after his children's cycle of feasts. After the cycle of feasts ran its course, Job offered burnt offerings to purify his children, because Job was anxious about whether or not they had sinned against God in their hearts. Job's anxiety about his children's potential sin in their hearts reflects Job's sense of responsibility.

Ironically, *hassatan* raises doubts over God's interpretation of Job's piety and focuses on Job's weakness, his children's potential impiety, by suggesting God tests Job by taking away everything he has, including his children. As a result, readers may read Job's anxious utterance, which has been used by the narrator to substantiate Job's righteousness in 1:5, as providing a reason that authorises his children's death. As Newsom claims,

¹¹³ Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry*, 161.

¹¹⁴ The narrator's voice and the messenger's voice are almost identical except for the possessive endings. The narrator's voice ends with the third person masculine suffix (his) (verse 13, but the messenger's voice ends with the second masculine singular suffix (you) (verse 19).

“in the prose tale of Job, Job’s sons and daughters are in a certain sense killed, not saved, because of his righteousness.”¹¹⁵

Job’s responsibility for his children’s death is supported by the word choice of the fourth messenger. Although the messenger specifically uses the words “sons and daughters” (בְּנֵיךָ וּבָנוֹתֶיךָ) to indicate Job’s sons and daughters in verse 18, s/he uses the words “the young men or servants” (הַנְּעָרִים) to indicate the people who die because of the incident of a great wind in verse 19. In the context of the scene, the word also includes Job’s children. By using the word to indicate Job’s children in verse 19, the messenger treats them as being under Job’s authority like the other servants, who are indicated by the word (הַנְּעָרִים) in the scene. The messenger implies that Job’s authority had been exercised over his children as much as it had been over his servants. Job’s dealing with his children as if they are sinners, causes Job’s children to die as if they are sinners.

After hearing the tragic news and responding physically, Job says,

Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there;
the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; *brk*¹¹⁶ be the name of the
Lord. (1:21)

As a response to messages about the loss of his possessions and the death of his servants and children, Job speaks about his coming from his mother’s womb and returning there naked. In his speech, Job implies that all his possessions were given by the Lord, so it is only natural that they are taken by the Lord. Why does Job utter such a speech in the first place and see his coming from his mother’s womb and returning there naked as metaphorical imagery for the Lord’s giving and taking?

For Job, God’s authoritative power is His power to maintain the order of the world. When the messengers delivered the news of Job’s tragic loss, particularly of his children, who had gathered together in the eldest son’s house and had been killed when a great wind hit the four corners of the house and the house fell on the young people, Job may have perceived that God’s authoritative power was still in the tragic events.

It is plausible that Job also sees God’s hand in the second messenger’s report of the falling of God’s fire (1:6). By confessing, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away” in 1:21, Job may be teaching his messengers to

¹¹⁵ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 39.

¹¹⁶ In the Hebrew verse, the verb “*brk*” is a dual participle masculine singular form.

consider God's hand/power as maintaining the order of the world rather than breaching the relationship between God and Job.

The explanation behind Job's reading of God's power in the tragic events as the authoritative power to preserve worldly order may be found in Job's understanding of his time 'day' in the present scene. As we discussed in the narrator's voice above, the third scene begins with the temporal indicator "the day." Even though the temporal word "the day" had been singled out from the word "days" at the end of the first scene, the implications of both words, "the day" and "days," are different. However, for Job, because the word "the day" in the present scene has been singled out from the word "days" in the first scene, he may perceive that "the day" in the present scene must share a similar function as "the days" in the first scene. Job may look at his 'day' in the present scene in the same way as he looked at 'days' in the first scene. If Job perceived all his 'days' as a regular cycle, he may continue to perceive his 'day' in the present scene as part of the same cycle, which may lead him to read God's hands in the tragic events as the authoritative power to maintain regularity in his life.

Consequently, as a result of his understanding of God's authoritative power behind the tragic events, Job declares that there is nothing strange about the news because his children's and servants' deaths are in the natural order of the world, since God made it that way: "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away." Particularly, Job does not see any reason to panic or suffer on account of the news of death, since Job finds a clear *justification* for the death of his servants and children. For Job, nakedness does not imply great shame (Genesis 9:20–27), weakness (Genesis 42:9, 12), or having been plundered or raped.¹¹⁷ Rather, nakedness is a natural part of the lifecycle. At the same time, both the Lord's provision and His taking away are also part of the natural order in the relationship with God, because according to Job's worldview, there is a time to be given something and a time to have it taken away.

Following on from the abovementioned analysis, readers of both the prologue and the book may conjecture that Job's speech shows his own knowledge about the prolongation of the order of the world by reading God's authoritative power behind the tragic events. Job's acknowledgement of the continuation of the order of the world and of life is approved of by the narrator, for the narrator concludes "in all this, Job did not sin by

¹¹⁷ F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Weep, O Daughter of Zion: A Study of the City-Lament Genre in the Hebrew Bible*, BibOr 44 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1993), 147–48.

charging God with wrongdoing.” However, there is an underlying problem with this approach. *What if* Job were to find out what had happened in the heavenly council in the previous scene (heavenly scene)? Would Job still make the same utterance as he did in 1:21, even after finding out that the tragic events came upon him as a result of the agreement between God and *hassatan* to test him, rather than being part of the natural order of Job’s regular lifecycle?

Job’s confession in 1:21 has to be read in the context of his ignorance of the discussion between God and *hassatan* in the previous scene. That being the case, are his words really a testimony to the truth of the description of him as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil? For this reason, Job’s utterance in the present scene cannot be relied upon as evidence for defining him as a perfect and pious man, since his voice was not formed by a full, sufficient and adequate knowledge.¹¹⁸

Concluding Remark

In the third scene, Job’s voice, along with the narrator’s voice, confirms his piety and the regularity in his life. Although the messengers imply that Job has lost his relationship with God and his control over his rhythmic, balanced and pious life, Job firmly believes his life to be in a controlled order. Job’s voice in 1:21 indicates his knowledge concerning the preservation of the order of the world. However, readers may conceive Job’s knowledge to be inadequate due to his ignorance of the heavenly scene, which ignorance is, in turn, due to his chronotopic limitations. Job’s limited knowledge concerning the heavenly council provokes readers to have inadequate faith in Job’s voice. This limitation in knowledge leaves readers confused, which in turn causes them to anticipate hearing other voices yet to come.

The Fourth Scene (Heavenly Realm: 2:1–7a)

By employing the temporal marker “the day” (הַיּוֹם), the narrator sends a signal to his or her readers that once again the scene has changed. The

¹¹⁸ According to Bakhtin (*Art and Answerability*, 13), characters are not capable of perceiving in all directions. Only the author can look both in the direction in which the characters look and also in a different direction that is inaccessible to the characters.

narrator separates the scene temporally and spatially from the previous earthly scene by using the temporal word “the day” and the spatial words “before the Lord.” Particularly, just as s/he did in the second scene, the narrator reveals the beginning of the dialogue between God and *hassatan* with temporal and spatial words in 2:1 and marks the end of the dialogue with *hassatan*’s movement, “leaving,” the space “before the presence of God” in 2:7a.

By repeating the beginning and the end of the dialogue between God and *hassatan*, the narrator demonstrates that God and *hassatan* have not changed. God is still presented as confined to His particular space. The sons of God come to him to report information to him, just as Job relies on his servants as messengers. Once again, in the heavenly scene, only *hassatan* is depicted as being able to journey between the two realms. God’s relationship to *hassatan* is the same as in the previous scene. The unaltered images of God and *hassatan* in the fourth scene mean that it is the dialogue between God and *hassatan* that has to move the plot in the scene, since the chronotope of the scene presents God as a character who is in a dialogic relationship¹¹⁹ with *hassatan*. God questions *hassatan* about Job and *hassatan* again challenges God concerning His interpretation of Job’s piety.

Although the narrator’s voice in the fourth scene is the same as it is in the second scene, the implication of the narrator’s voice in the fourth scene is not identical to that in the second scene.¹²⁰ First, the repetition of the same temporal and spatial indicators is not intended simply to identify the fourth scene with the second scene but to remind readers of the discussion between God and *hassatan* in the second scene, so that readers may expect to see another discussion between God and *hassatan*. Is the testing of Job completed or not? Is another tragic event imminent for Job?

The second disparity is that the narrator adds the phrase “to present himself before the Lord” (להתיצב על יהוה) to the description of *hassatan*.¹²¹ Just as the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord,

¹¹⁹ The book will discuss further about God in the dialogic relationship with *hassatan* under the section of God’s voice.

¹²⁰ Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 26.

¹²¹ The LXX does not have this phrase specifically for *hassatan*. The book follows the MT version.

hassatan is at the same time introduced as coming to present himself before the Lord.

Why does the narrator add this phrase? Again, the chronotope of the fourth scene reminds readers of the narrative event in the second scene. The second scene closes with an agreement between God and *hassatan* to test Job's piety by removing all his possessions. Following the execution of the test on Job discussed in the second scene, the fourth scene introduces *hassatan's* presence before the Lord as a messenger, who reports the outcome of the test on Job to the Lord. While the second scene implies that *hassatan* just accompanied the sons of God, the fourth scene makes it clear that *hassatan* approaches the Lord with a *specific purpose*.¹²²

God's voice in the fourth as well as in the second scene functions to open the door for the dialogue with *hassatan*. In the fourth scene, it retains its ambiguity through the loophole in God's speeches.

2:3 and 6 are God's words to *hassatan*. 2:3 includes the repetition of God's words in 1:8 with additions: God adds the words "He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." The speech shows God's reading/perception of Job's utterance in 1:21 and points at *hassatan's* incorrect assumption. Contrary to *hassatan's* prediction in the second scene but consistent with God's reading of Job's voice, Job still upholds his piety even in the midst of tragic events and suffering.

The speech indicates more than just God's victorious announcement over *hassatan*. The words "He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason" represent God as a very ambiguous being in several ways. Consequently, it is God's ambiguous character in the present scene which leads readers to doubt God's understanding of Job's speech in 1:21.

The first part of the speech "He still persists in his integrity . . ." suggests that God/the Lord already knew, even before *hassatan* reports, that Job is holding on to his integrity. From the speech, it may not be clear to readers how God knew about Job's perseverance and how much God knew about Job's piety. Why is the text silent about how God knew this? Does the text presuppose that its readers assume God already knew about the news, because God is YHWH¹²³ and YHWH has no need to learn what

¹²² Clines, *Job 1–20*, 41; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 94.

¹²³ Pyper, *David As Reader*, 56–57. For the divine name 'YHWH' in the Bible, please see Parke-Taylor, *Yahweh*.

has taken place because He is omniscient? Or does the text presuppose that one of the sons of God other than *hassatan* had already reported the news about Job to God, since the chronotope of the scene defines God in a specific place and time?

Clines suggests,

Perhaps it is a simple foreshortening of the narrative for the sake of the movement of the dialogue; or more probably, it is important that the attestation of Job's continued piety should be set in the mouth of Yahweh rather than of the Satan.¹²⁴

It may be possible that, for the sake of the movement of the dialogue, the text, in the second scene, is not interested in telling its readers about how God knew or God's omniscience, but rather is interested in portraying how God utilizes the information about Job's upholding of his piety to invalidate *hassatan*'s suggestion.

Also, how much does God know about Job's heart? It is not clear whether or not God can fully perceive whether or not Job's piety is genuine. Readers may assume that God's understanding of Job's continuing piety comes from God's reading of Job's speech in 1:21. In reality, the loophole in the previous scene has promoted an image of God drastically different from that with which readers are familiar from the Hebrew Bible. Is this God omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent?

Second, God's accusation in 2:3 "...although you incited me against him..." sits oddly with the first part of the speech. What does the verb "incite" (תסיתני) mean? Could it imply that God has had second thoughts about His own interpretation of Job's piety?¹²⁵ If readers note the homophony between the Hebrew verb "incite" (תסיתני) in the hiphil form and the name "*hassatan*" (השטן), this may suggest that God anticipated *hassatan*'s counter-interpretation of God's perception of Job. The similar sound of both words may make readers perceive the sense of the "*Satanisierung*" of God¹²⁶ in the prologue. Consequently, the meaning of inciting God is that *hassatan* makes God doubt His own interpretation of Job, just as

¹²⁴ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 41–42.

¹²⁵ Under the discussion about God's voice and *hassatan*'s voice in the second scene, the book fully discussed that God thinks that Job's piety was not contingent on his possessions but *hassatan* understood that Job's piety depended on his possessions.

¹²⁶ According to Hermann Spieckermann ("Die Satanisierung Gottes. Zur inneren Kondordanz von Novelle, Dialog und Gottesreden im Hiobbuch," in *Wer ist wie du, HERR, unter den Göttern? Studien zur Theologie und Religionsgeschichte Israels: Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Ingo Kottsieper et al. [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994], 432), "Hiob satanisierten Gott zum Feind" (Job satanized God as an enemy).

hassatan doubted God's interpretation of Job's piety. God almost becomes like *hassatan* who planned to destroy Job without reason.¹²⁷

If God's speech does include such an implication as that suggested above, God seems to be admitting to the fact that He is vulnerable to being incited by *hassatan*.¹²⁸ However, God also has the authority to give permission and to initiate *hassatan*'s act according to 2:6: "Very well, he is in your power, only spare his life." God's speech in 2:6 shows his ambivalent character: on the one hand, his vulnerability to *hassatan*'s incitement and on the other, his control over *hassatan* and his actions.¹²⁹

Further, in the third part of verse 3, God implies that *hassatan* incited him to destroy "without reason" or "for nothing." From the point of view of readers, the first test proved that Job's piety is not contingent on his possessions.¹³⁰ This brings readers who are familiar with the law of retribution¹³¹ to conclude that there has been a breach of the law.¹³²

However, readers may have a difficult time making sense of the phrase "without reason" or "for nothing" in God's voice. First, is God's complaint against *hassatan* that Job went through undeserved destruction because of *hassatan*'s incitement? Specifically, does the word "*hinnam*" imply God's own breach of the law of retribution, because God allows Job to go through undeserved suffering and devastation? A righteous man has suffered for being righteous.

Second, does the word "*hinnam*" imply that it is a natural phenomenon for a pious man to receive (undeserved) suffering, since there is no such law of retribution? Third, does the word "*hinnam*" refer to *hassatan*'s fruitless or worthless plan for Job? From God's point of view, *hassatan*'s attempt to test Job was futile from the beginning. These are tough questions to answer in the scene because the text does not provide clear support with which to determine God's thinking behind his phrase "without reason" or "for nothing."

¹²⁷ According to God's speech in 2:3, *hassatan* was the one who tried to provoke God to destroy without reason or for nothing (*hinnam*).

¹²⁸ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 94.

¹²⁹ Lowell K. Handy, "The Authorization of Divine Power and the Guilt of God in the Book of Job: Useful Ugaritic Parallels," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 60 (1993): 107–118; R.N. Whybray, "The Immorality of God: Reflections On Some Passages in Genesis, Job, Exodus and Numbers," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (1996): 104.

¹³⁰ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 42.

¹³¹ The law of retribution is clearly enunciated in several passages in the book of Deuteronomy (6–8), Psalms (112; 128:1–4) and so on.

¹³² Clines, *Job 1–20*, 43.

The ambiguities in God's voice lead readers to perceive that God is again in a dialogic relationship with others. This perception may induce readers to understand God as One who wants to hear Job's voice to determine whether Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. In order to hear Job's voice, God agrees with *hassatan* to retest Job but commands *hassatan* not to touch Job's *nefesh*.

The point here is that the translation of *nefesh* as life or soul obscures its root meaning of breath or throat. Throat or breath is the minimum that can be preserved so that Job continues to have a voice. Job's voice must be preserved for the test to have any meaning. If Job no longer had a voice, he could not *brk* God and neither God nor *hassatan* could claim victory in the text.

Hassatan's first answer in 2:2 is the repetition of 1:7. Why does *hassatan* use the same words used in 1:7 to answer God's question "where have you come from?" It is clear that the scene comes after the first test on Job has been executed and readers are waiting to find out how both God and *hassatan* assess the result of the test. However, it is unclear why *hassatan* does not mention the result of the first test until God mentions it first.

Another utterance in verse 3 adds further ambiguities to *hassatan*'s character. *Hassatan* answers, "Skin for skin¹³³ (עֹר בְּעַד עֹר), All that people have they will give to save their lives." *Hassatan*'s proverbial saying "skin for skin" is extremely difficult to interpret,¹³⁵ though several commentators have tried to provide possible interpretations for the saying.¹³⁶ Why does *hassatan* utter the proverbial saying "skin for skin"?

¹³³ The scholarship offers several suggestions for the meaning of the enigmatic phrase "skin for skin": 1) One part of the body for another; 2) One skin for another skin; 3) One skin beyond (בְּעַד) skin; 4) a man will give anyone else's skin for his own, i.e., to save his own skin; 5) "attack [Job] and you will find that he [Job] attacks you [God]" (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 20; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 44–45). Obviously, these suggested meanings indicate the difficulties in reading of the phrase. The book reads the difficulties in reading of the phrase as the ambiguities of the phrase. Since *hassatan*'s character is not clearly identified in the prologue, his speech would be ambiguous because each character's unfinalization, destabilization and ambiguity make the meaning of each character's speech undecidable (Carol Newsom, "Re-Considering Job," *Currents in Biblical Research* 5.2 (2007): 159). Also, the book interprets the ambiguity of *hassatan*'s speech as intentionally placed in the prologue by the polyphonic author of *Job* in order to fit well into the purpose of the prologue which invites readers to dialogically interact with the text.

¹³⁴ BDB (126 n. 2) provides another possible meaning for the word: "on behalf of." Also, the meaning of "in exchange for" can be found in the word. (cf. Clines, *Job 1–20*, 5)

¹³⁵ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 43.

¹³⁶ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 43–45; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 20; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 95; Pope, *Job*, 20.

God has won over *hassatan* in the first test of Job. After observing the failure of his plan, *hassatan* intends to suggest another test, one that is more severe. *Hassatan* looks at and considers Job's skin. Why does *hassatan* choose to touch Job's skin as a more severe test? Readers may construe two possible reasons from *hassatan's* speech. First, according to the phrase that continues from the proverbial saying "all that a man has he will give for his life" (וכל אשר לאיש יתן בעד נפשו), readers may acknowledge that *hassatan* has already heard Job's confession in 1:21: "the Lord has given and the Lord has taken away" and learnt that Job understands all possessions are from the Lord. Accordingly, *hassatan* comes to realise that it was only natural for Job not to *brk* God. God who gave him all that he had has a right to take all that he had away from him. In addition, *hassatan* may read Job's speech in 1:21 as implying that Job did not sin because at least God spared his life.¹³⁷

Second, in the first test, God explicitly forbids *hassatan* to touch Job (יך אל תשלח ידך: 1:12). *Hassatan* perceived that the first test has been done in an inadequate way. Since, according to *hassatan's* acknowledgment, Job discerned that the loss of all possessions could be construed as part of the natural order of Job's life, Job did not *brk* God. Therefore, *hassatan* suggests that Job would certainly *brk* God if something were to endanger his life.

As a consequence, *hassatan* suggests to God that he should touch Job's bone and flesh in 2:5. In touching Job's bone and flesh, *hassatan* may be planning to destroy Job's body. This would lead to Job's space being estranged, since "the body . . . is the space of the self."¹³⁸ Readers may surmise that by breaking Job's body and space, *hassatan* intends to deliver a message to Job that he has completely lost his ability to maintain or reconstruct his piety. This time, the plan for the test on Job goes according to *hassatan's* plan. Unlike the first test, God agrees with *hassatan's* suggestion by allowing *hassatan* to touch Job (יך בידך: 2:6). God is also willing to hear from Job's voice whether or not he would *brk* God by sparing his *nefesh* (נפשו).¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 43.

¹³⁸ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 135.

¹³⁹ The Hebrew word '*nefesh*' (BDB, 659–60) can be translated 'breath or the breathing being' and 'seat of emotions and passions'. By reading the word with the meaning of breathing and seat of emotions, we can assume that the purpose of the test is to hear Job's voice, particularly his emotionally charged voice, since a voice cannot be heard without breath.

However, there is vagueness in *hassatan's* suggestion. What leads *hassatan* to the conviction that Job would *brk* God, if his bone and flesh were touched by God and his space were to become estranged? Was *hassatan's* purpose simply to hear Job's voice *brk* God or more than that? Actually, there is a possibility that *hassatan's* literary function in the prologue is more than just to test Job's piety. *Hassatan's* voice may function to determine God's character in the prologue rather than to prove Job's unconditional piety. *Hassatan* may want God to hear what Job thinks of God himself after the tragic events. *Hassatan* may want to point out that Job has a different understanding of God. Although God defines Job as his servant (1:8; 2:3), blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil (1:8; 2:3), Job may have a different image of God, if his space becomes estranged. Job may alter his understanding about God after the tragic events.

Concluding Remark

In the fourth scene, readers hear a discussion between God and *hassatan* concerning Job again. However, the discussion in this scene reflects God's and *hassatan's* voices responding to their agreement in the second scene and Job's responses to the tragic events in the third scene. As in the second scene, God and *hassatan* fail to finalize Job in their discussion and decide to retest him employing a more severe test to define whether or not Job is a perfectly righteous man. God and *hassatan* agree to destroy Job's body and space.

Although God agrees with *hassatan's* suggestion to destroy Job's body and space, God forbids *hassatan* from touching Job's *nefesh*. Leaving Job's *nefesh* unscathed provides God and *hassatan* with the chance of hearing Job's voice/*nefesh*, so that they can decide whether or not Job is a man who is blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil.

The Fifth Scene (Earthly Realm: 2:7b–10)

This scene is a very interesting one in the prologue. In the narrator's voice, there is no specific temporal indicator like "days" or "the day" but there is a clear indication of *hassatan's* touching Job. The spatial marker is that Job is "among the ashes." Also, Job's wife is introduced once in the scene. The following analysis will show how each voice is described.

Unlike in the second, third and fourth scenes the narrator omits the temporal indicator “the day” at the beginning of the fifth scene. In 2:7, the scene changes from the heavenly scene to the earthly scene without any time interval being indicated. The lack of the temporal marker in the scene portrays the immediacy of *hassatan*’s affliction of Job.¹⁴⁰ While the third scene indicates the immediacy of the four calamities by excluding a time interval between the arrival of each of the messengers, the fifth scene elucidates the immediacy of Job’s second affliction by removing the temporal marker “the day.” Without a time indicator, readers may see that Job’s second suffering immediately follows *hassatan*’s departure from God’s presence in 2:7 and that there is no time interval between *hassatan*’s departure from God’s presence and his smiting of Job’s body.

In addition, the absence of a time interval signifies Job’s loss of time. In the act of being touched in his body by *hassatan*, Job has begun to lose his space. The narrator announces in the scene that having lost his space, Job is also losing his time. It is impossible to perceive time without space in literature, since, according to Bakhtin, space materialises time and time charges the movement of space.¹⁴¹ Thus, *hassatan*’s smiting of Job’s body highlights the crisis in Job’s life and Job at his threshold.¹⁴²

In particular, the spatial marker, “among the ashes” (בתוך האפר), clearly indicates Job’s physical position in the scene. Job is in a time when he cannot go back to the previous Job who had piety and possessions. This description of Job’s position in time and space “seems to conform exactly to Bakhtin’s words about time taking on flesh in the chronotope.”¹⁴³ Job has moved from completeness to fragmentation. This describes time spent and space covered.

His situation corresponds closely to what Bakhtin says of the “chronotope of the threshold,” which can be “combined with the motif of encounter, but its most fundamental instance is as the chronotope of crisis and break in a life.”¹⁴⁴ Job’s chronotope of the threshold may signal both his loss of time and space and his entrance into the estranged chronotope.

Also, the narrator’s word on Job in the last verse of the scene (2:10) presents an ambiguity in Job’s character. “In all this Job did not sin with

¹⁴⁰ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 47.

¹⁴¹ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 250.

¹⁴² Ibid., 248.

¹⁴³ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 215.

¹⁴⁴ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 248; Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 216.

his lips" (בכל זאת לא חטא איוב בשפתיו). What does the utterance mean? As *B. Baba Batra* 16a interprets it, is the narrator implying that Job did not sin with his lips, but that in his heart he did?¹⁴⁵ Or as Ibn Ezra saw, is the narrator implying that Job did not sin with his lips at this very moment, but that he would in the future?¹⁴⁶ Or does the narrator present Job's situation as one where he has lost everything but his lips? Due to the multitude of options for interpreting this phrase, readers have difficulty in discerning the condition of Job's heart based only upon the narrator's utterance.

Since Job still has his lips to speak, readers may desire again to hear Job's voice and continue to read the book to fulfil their desire. Eventually Job opens his mouth in the next chapter to fulfil the readers' desire. The narrator's specific mentioning of Job's lips in 2:10 will be rewarded in 3:1 where Job opens his mouth to curse his birthday.¹⁴⁷

Job's Wife's Voice

Job's wife appears only in the fifth scene. Her speech is not long, but is one of the most controversial in the prologue: "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? *brk*"¹⁴⁸ God and die!" Many interpreters of *Job* suggest several possible functions for the character of Job's wife's and interpretations of her speech. If we oversimplify the commentators' interpretations of Job's

¹⁴⁵ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 55; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 22; Pope, *Job*, 23.

¹⁴⁶ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 55; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 22.

¹⁴⁷ Habel (*The Book of Job*, 97) pronounces that the restraint of Job's lips has hardly been mentioned before Job's 'opens up his mouth' and begins to curse (3:1).

¹⁴⁸ I have already argued concerning the word '*brk*' in *hassatan's* voice from page 68 to page 71 of the book. Like the explanation of the word '*brk*' in *hassatan's* voice, the word '*brk*' in Job's wife's voice can be understood in three possible ways: 'Standard Euphemism theory' (44 n. 59), 'Speech Act theory' (58nn101–102), and 'Literal sense'. According to standard euphemism theory, the word '*brk*' can be translated as 'curse'. Job's wife's intention in using the word '*brk*' as 'curse' might be that since God allows Job the severe sufferings regardless of Job's integrity, it is justifiable for Job to curse God. According to speech act theory, the word '*brk*' means 'bless', but when God hears the word 'bless' from Job's mouth, He might be offended. According to the literal sense, the word '*brk*' means 'bless' and may indicate that Job's wife's intention is that since Job still holds fast to his integrity, he should bless God as a last chance to show his integrity before God and men die. However, there are still difficulties in deciding which meaning is appropriate for the word '*brk*' in Job's wife's mouth. The book argues that while on the one hand, the difficulties of reading of the meaning of the word '*brk*' in Job's wife's mouth strengthens Job's wife as an ambiguous character in the prologue, on the other hand, Job's wife's ambiguity makes the word '*brk*' more ambiguous. As for Job, Job's wife's suggestion that he should *brk* God might not be significant or meaningful because Job has already *brk* God in *Job* 1:21.

wife and her speech, we can divide them into two groups. The one is to see her in a negative way—Job's wife as an advocator/helper of *hassatan*—and the other is to look at her sympathetically—Job's wife as a compassionate wife.¹⁴⁹ However, the problem is that there is no consensus concerning Job's wife's character or the meaning of her speech.

Actually, the ambiguities in Job's wife's character and speech fit into the prologue very well, since the purpose of the prologue is to invite readers to anticipate the process of the determination of characters in the prologue by presenting the characters ambivalently. Job's wife plays her role as a literary device to show that Job was not influenced by his wife—unlike God who had been satanized by *hassatan* in the previous scenes. How could Job reject the influence of his wife's speech? The answer may be given by looking at Job's speech.

Job perceives his wife's speech as a word from one of the "foolish women." Job may easily reject the influence of such a word on his authoring of himself. Does Job consider his wife's speech to be foolish because he understands her speech to be words against God? Does Job reject his wife's speech even though her speech came from her compassion for Job? It is not clear how Job understands his wife's words. However, in reading the scene alongside the previous one, readers may assume one possible explanation in the light of God's speech in the previous scene "Behold, he is in your hand; but keep his *nefesh*." These speeches contradict each other. In God's speech, the basic rule of this game between God and *hassatan* to test Job is that he is to be kept alive, since the game cannot go on once Job dies. Therefore, for the readers, Job's wife's speech can be heard as that of a foolish woman, because her speech, suggesting Job dies, ends the game without fulfilling the readers' desire to hear Job's responses.

¹⁴⁹ For discussions of various interpretations concerning Job's wife, see Erin Runions, "Ms Job and the Problem of God: A Feminist, Existentialist, Materialist Reading," in *From the Margins 1: Women of the Hebrew Bible and Their Afterlives*, ed. Peter S. Hawkins and Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg, *The Bible in the Modern World* 18 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2009), 174–89; C.L. Seow, "Job's Wife," in *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld*, ed. Linda Day and Carolyn Pressler (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 141–52; Rachel F. Magdalene, "Job's Wife as Hero: A Feminist-Forensic Reading of the Book of Job," *Biblical Interpretation* 14 (2006): 209–58; Claire Mathews McGinnis, "Playing the Devil's Advocate in Job: On Job's Wife," in *The Whirlwind*, ed. Cook, Patton and Watts, 121–41; Zefira Gitay, "The Portrayal of Job's Wife and her Representation in the Visual Arts," in *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Astrid B. Beck et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 516–23.

For Job, his wife's suggestion that he should die meant that Job would be deprived of the opportunity to answer or respond. Job's ability to answer is the essential component that gives the book of *Job* a unity between the poetic section and the epilogue. Job's ability to answer is also the essential condition in the discussion between God and *hassatan*. In the heavenly scene, God and *hassatan* agree on at least one thing. The agreement is to make sure that Job stays alive in order for them to hear whether or not he would *brk* God. Without *nefesh*, it would be impossible for both God and *hassatan* to hear Job's voice. If they cannot hear Job's voice, it is not possible to decide who wins this game. Thus, since Job's wife's speech implies the elimination of Job's ability to answer, Job defines her speech as that of a foolish woman (2:10).

If Job has his ability to answer in mind when he presents his wife's speech as that of a foolish woman, does the implication foreshadow something to come? Does this imply that Job has insight into his wife's speech, even though he rebukes her? Does Job's wife's speech provoke Job to think about his ability to answer, even though it did not influence him to kill himself? Although the text does not clearly provide answers to the question, the text makes two implications.

First, Job still has the ability to respond since he refuses to die. Job's keeping his life therefore signifies the fulfilment of readers' desires to hear Job's voice as much as it does the fulfilment of God's and *hassatan*'s desires and God's words in 2:6 to "keep his *nefesh*." Keeping Job's *nefesh* is essential for Job's speeches for the future (in the poetic section).

Second, Job refuses his wife's suggestion to die, because, according to Job's understanding in 2:10, "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" Even terrible events like death come from God and are not men's choice¹⁵⁰ as he confesses in 1:21 "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away." Thus, Job reads that his wife's suggestion that he die may deny God's power and breach God's creative order. For Job, his wife's suggestion is unacceptable and as foolish as a man denying God's existence.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ This understanding may foreshadow Job's understanding of his time and space in the dialogue section as one where it is impossible to die and God does not give him death. We will discuss this idea more in chapter 3.

¹⁵¹ S.R. Driver (*Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890], 26) argues that the word (נבל) means moral and religious insensibility and an indomitable lack of perception for the statements of either God or man. In a similar way, Ellen Davis ("Job and Jacob: The Integrity of Faith," in *The Whirlwind*, ed. Cook, Patton and Watts, 105) declares, "the term is applied to those who have a settled incapacity

Concluding Remark

The fifth scene begins without a specific temporal indicator for the chronotope of the scene. Without a specific temporal indicator, the narrator's voice signals the vanishing of Job's time and with Job's place among the ashes, the narrator's voice presents Job at a threshold. Instead of finalizing Job as a perfectly pious man in the prologue, the narrator's voice depicts Job as a man who continues to live in a different world. The narrator provokes readers to assume that Job is about to enter an estranged chronotope. Particularly, through the discussion between Job and his wife, readers may have a hunch that Job's voice is ready to speak out to define himself as a pious man, since Job implicitly proclaims that he has unfinalized or unfinished business to talk about.

The Sixth Scene (Earthly Realm: 2:11–13)

The last scene is in the narrator's voice and introduces Job's three friends and their reaction to Job and his suffering. In verse 11, the narrator delivers three pieces of information about them to his/her readers. First of all, they are all friends of Job, whose names are Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. Second, they all have different origins: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite and come from different places (ויבאו ממוקמי אִישׁ מִמָּקוֹמוֹ 2:11). Third, they have gathered together to come to mourn for Job's sake and to comfort him. They each had to make a journey in order to gather together and to come to Job, since they are from different places.

In verse 12, the narrator reports the reaction of Job's three friends' after they saw Job. According to the narrator, although his three friends saw Job, they did not recognize him. Since they did not recognize him, "they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads." Why did they not recognise Job even though they saw him?

In the narrator's utterance, readers see a story of recognition/failure of recognition. According to Bakhtin, a road is the most popular metaphor for encounter.¹⁵² The road is the best place for encountering and recognizing

to perceive the blessings or demands of Israel's God: the heathen (Deut. 32:21; Ps. 74:18.22) or the practical atheist (Ps. 14:1)."

¹⁵² Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 98.

or failing to recognise. The problematic element is that they saw Job from a distance (מרחוק). Without looking more closely, the three friends initiated their mental and verbal act: “recognize/acknowledge.” When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize (ולא הכירוהו) him.

Why did they not recognize him? Clines suggests a very plausible explanation for this. According to Clines, the Hebrew word not only refers to “a mental action of recognising” but also “includes a verbal consequence such as ‘acknowledging’ or some other act that translates the mental recognition into reality.”¹⁵³ When Job’s three friends saw Job, they did not recognize Job as Job. Rather, Job’s friends acknowledged/perceived Job as a person who was already dead rather than Job as a living person.¹⁵⁴

Job’s three friends’ interpretation of Job as already dead is what leads them to perform mourning rituals: not speaking any word for seven days and seven nights.¹⁵⁵ The performance of the mourning rituals signals Job’s friends’ failure to fulfil their role as friends and their failure to carry out their original purpose for coming to Job ‘to bemoan for Job’s sake and comfort Job.’ Instead, they come to attend a funeral service marking Job’s death.¹⁵⁶

Why did they acknowledge Job as already dead? It may be because they see Job sitting on the ashes (2:8). “Ashes” are associated with ritual acts of mourning in the Hebrew Bible¹⁵⁷ and refer to the remains of a corpse consumed in fire.^{158,159} Since Job’s friends saw Job from a distance, they recognised Job among the ashes as a corpse.

Job’s three friends’ treatment of Job as already dead would strongly impact on Job’s perception of himself because he thinks that he is still alive, even though he is at the threshold of death. Job retains his ability to answer.

In addition, Job may think that his three friends might not acknowledge him as righteous anymore: Job knows that the friends know that death

¹⁵³ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 61.

¹⁵⁴ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 61; Dan Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 39.

¹⁵⁵ The period of seven days is a standard time for mourning (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 63) and the silence or speechlessness is part of the mourning ritual (Norbert Lohfink, “Enthielten die im Alten Testament bezeugten Klageriten eine Phase des Schweigens,” *Vetus Testamentum* 12 [1962], 260–77; Pham, *Mourning in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible*, 29–31).

¹⁵⁶ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 61.

¹⁵⁷ Est. 4:1, 3; Isa. 61:3; Jer. 6:26; Ezek. 27:30; Jon. 3:6.

¹⁵⁸ Num. 19:9, 10; Ezek. 28:18.

¹⁵⁹ Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 6.

“proves divine justice to be operative” and “it is reserved for the wicked.”¹⁶⁰ Readers may anticipate the way Job reacts to his friends, when they treat him as wicked or a sinner and as having lost his ability to answer given how Job responded to his wife when she suggested Job should die (and therefore lose his ability to answer). He defined her as foolish.

From the reader’s point of view, Job’s three friends, rather than his wife, may appear as foolish people, because Job’s three friends’ inability to recognize Job from a distance may foreshadow Job’s three friends’ inability to recognize the truth about God just as God rebukes them in 42:7.

Yet at the end of this chapter is silence. Neither Job nor the friends speak. Job’s carefully preserved voice, which God, *hassatan*, Job and the reader have such interest in hearing, is not heard. Yet time continues in this silence, as seven days go past. Finally, however, the silencing of all the voices in the text is, as we shall see, the precondition for the radical breaking down and restructuring of the chronotope and thus of Job’s identity in the chapters to come. Job is alive, and retains his *nefesh*, which means that he retains the potential to answer the voices in the prologue.

Concluding Remark

The sixth scene introduces Job’s three friends, who come from different localities and fail to recognize Job because they regarded him as already dead. After introducing Job’s three friends, the last scene closes the prologue with silence between Job and his three friends. The silence in the last scene as a closure to the prologue does not actually signify the end of Job and *Job*. Rather, the silence provides readers with a temporal break before the next stage when readers will hear different voices from Job and from his three friends, since Job’s *nefesh* and Job’s three friends’ voices are about to speak out.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined how each voice—the narrator’s voice, Job’s voice, God’s voice, *hassatan*’s voice, Job’s messengers’ voices, Job’s wife’s voice—work to finalize Job in the prologue. In our reading, we discovered that the narrator’s voice does not take a clear, lucid and firm

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 5. Cf. Job 4:3–9; 18; 20.

position on Job but rather offers his or her position as an inviter who opens space and time for other voices to interact dialogically and discuss Job in the prologue.

God's voice and *hassatan's* voice seem to have their own definite perception about Job, but still their voices in both heavenly scenes turn to Job's voice/*nefesh* to provide an adequate definition of Job: whether or not he is a perfectly pious and righteous man. Job's voice begins to speak about himself through his self-understanding and dialogical interaction with his messengers' voices and with his wife's voice.

In the first scene, Job believes himself to be a priest-king-like father, who is pious and perfect. However, this belief is shattered by the arrival of his messengers' with a time interval signalling Job's complete loss of his possessions and children. Job's loss of fatherhood and priest-king-like position might provoke his messengers to assume that his relationship with God has been broken and that he is neither pious nor righteous after all.

In the fourth scene, the book argues that *hassatan's* suggestion of touching Job's body causes Job to lose his space. At the same time, Job's loss of space materialises his loss of time. Particularly, Job's loss of time is reflected by the transition from the fourth scene to the fifth scene where no temporal indicator is given.

Also, in the fifth scene, Job hears his wife's voice. Job responds to his wife's voice by declaring that his voice is still alive and must be heard. Job has yet to be finalized in the prologue. In fact, Job's discussion with his wife in the scene elevates readers' expectation to hear how Job's voice speaks out to define his identity as a pious man.

Finally, the introduction of Job's three friends in the last scene clarifies the fact that Job's voice is still alive and able to interact dialogically with his three friends' voices. By reading a dialogical interrelationship between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, readers may expect to hear how his friends finalize Job.

So, the prologue introduces several voices' attempts to finalize Job. However, their voices fail to satisfy readers' desire to finalize Job. Instead, their voices heighten readers' expectation to hear other voices. Thus, from the next two chapters on, we will examine Job's voice and his three friends' voices thoroughly in order to read how they satisfy readers in their attempt to define Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil in the chronotope of the dialogue section.

CHAPTER THREE

JOB'S SPEECHES IN HIS NEW CHRONOTOPE

After the seven days and nights of silence, Job begins to speak. While the narrator's voice and other characters' voices did not provide clear, satisfactory, cogent information concerning Job as a perfectly pious man in the prologue, Job's voice in chapter 3 is uniquely different from his voice and other voices in the prologue. Job attempts to finalize himself as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil in the new/estranged chronotope by manifesting his reading of himself.

Hence, in this chapter, the discussion centers on Job's speeches in chapters 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10 to show how Job reveals his identity as a man through his recontextualization of his suffering and his friends' speeches in this new chronotope. Specifically, this chapter examines Job's self-identity in his speeches in this chronotope by separating these chapters into two groups: chapter 3 and chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10. By examining Job's use of language in his speech, this chapter hopes to show how Job displays a sense of who he is and his suffering in this chronotope in his relationship to himself, his three friends and God, for "narrative language contributes to the construction and display of our sense of who we are"¹ and "every language in the novel is a point of view, a socio-ideological conceptual system of real social groups and their embodied representatives."²

Job's Language in the New/Estranged Chronotope of Chapter 3

Before studying Job's speeches in the new chronotope, we need to see what spatial and temporal language Job uses in the chapter. The book will then analyze the chronotopic language in the chapter.

¹ Deborah Schiffrin, "Narrative as Self-Portrait: Sociolinguistic Constructions of Identity," *Language in Society* 25 (1996): 168.

² Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 411.

Spatial Language in the Chapter

Job's space is ambiguous throughout the entire poetic or dialogue section of *Job*. No reader can clearly identify Job's place: where he is. Job enters this estranged space from chapter 3 on. There is absolutely nothing remaining for him. Everything has been taken away from him except his *nefesh*. Even the language that Job and his three friends used to share has disappeared. Before Job opens his mouth to speak, there were no words or language for seven days and nights (2:13). Job's space is a void to Job and his friends and the readers.

However, the narrator mentions in 3:1 that Job opens his mouth and starts to speak. In doing so, the narrator is attempting to give his audiences or readers a cue that Job intends to deliver a message about his own understanding of this estranged space. When the narrator notes that Job opens his mouth, it becomes obvious to readers that Job is responding to the estranged space. Opening his mouth says two things to readers: (1) there exists a certain relationship between Job and the estranged space; (2) there exists a certain point of view belonging to Job alone, for Bakhtin says a point of view is "situated in a physical body that occupies [time and] space." Here the physical body, Job's mouth with its point of view, is embodied in a particular man [at a particular time and] in a particular place.³ Therefore, readers expect Job to speak about his relationship to the estranged space and his specific point of view in the chapter.

In chapter 3, Job uses spatial words, or at least words that serve to give a sense of his location, such as "my womb" and "womb" (רחם and בטן: verses 10 and 11), "knees" (ברכים: verse 12), "breasts" (שדים: verse 12), "there" (שם: verses 17 and 19), and "grave" (קבר). What kind of message does Job intend to deliver? What role do such spatial words play in chapter 3? The answers to these questions can be found in Job's choice of temporal language/words.

Temporal Language in the Chapter

Unlike space, time is discussed very noticeably in the dialogue section. Job uses several different temporal words such as day, night, now and darkness to speak in his new estranged chronotope. In the chapter, Job uses

³ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, xxviii.

“day” (יום: verse 3), “the night” (הלילה: verse 3, 6, 7), “light” (נהרה: verse 4 and אור: verses 9, 16, 20), and “now” (עתה: verse 13). Job’s use of these temporal words is a clear indication of Job’s relationship to time. The temporal words along with the spatial words, in particular, manifest Job’s peculiar understanding in the chapter. By delving into Job’s use of these words, readers can discover how Job understands himself in this new and estranged chronotope and how the new and estranged chronotope influences Job to understand himself the way he does in the chapter.

Chronotope in Chapter 3

As far as temporal and spatial language is concerned, there are two words that appear often. The two main chronotopic words in chapter 3 are womb (רחם or בטן) and day (יום). Based on an initial investigation of these two words, we can develop our idea of how Job uses other chronotopic words in the chapter. The womb is a critically important place for Job, because without it Job would be nonexistent. The womb gives meaning to Job’s body and to his present place. Job can define his relationship to the present space/place via the womb, because the womb is a door opening the world to Job. The womb provides Job with a starting point from which he can speak about his birth, infancy and the present situation. The womb is a place where Job can connect himself to the past and the present. Consequently, the womb is a place where his birthday becomes visible.

The temporal word “day” plays a significant role with the word “womb” in bringing the space to Job. The word “day” makes it possible for readers to understand Job’s relationship to space in the chapter. As the day functioned well in the prologue, the day successfully plays out its role again in the first verse of the chapter with Job’s speeches in it by interrupting the silence that started in 2:13. By breaking the silence between Job and his friends, the use of the word “day” signals another event.⁴ However, the day in the prologue and the day in Job’s speeches have varied functions. While the day in the prologue is used to signal the movement and sequence of an event, the day in Job’s speeches is used to reflect Job’s “moral imagination.”⁵

⁴ Bakhtin explains one of the functions of the chronotope as the beginning of events in literature. Also, Normal Habel and Clines look at Job’s curse as an event. (Habel, *The Book of Job*, 107; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 78)

⁵ Newsom uses the term ‘moral imagination’ to indicate the different and unique perspective of each genre in the book of *Job* in her book *The Book of Job*.

Both the narrator's introduction of Job's cursing his day in verse 1 in the narrator's voice and Job's very first speech in verse 3 including the word the day uncover another plot for readers. However, the word the day in verse 1 has a different implication to that of the same word in verse 3.⁶ The day in verse 3 indicates the time when he was born in the first place, a time with resonances with the prologue, but the day in verse 1 indicates the time when he is put in the place where he is now. These differences can be clearly explained by the concept of the chronotope, because chronotope organizes the center for the fundamental narrative events in texts and begins and ends a narrative.⁷

In verse 3, Job wishes for the day that he was born to perish. In particular, when readers read the day with the night (verse 3) and his womb (verse 10), they can easily distinguish the day in verse 3 from the day in verse 1 and can recognize that the former indicates the time when he was born. At the moment he is speaking, that day has already happened and passed because the mere fact that he is speaking at the moment means that he has already been born. In other words, the chronotope, or the time and space into which he was born, is/are not the same time and space which Job occupies now. This is how the day in verse 1 signals the new chronotope that Job is experiencing at this moment. Job who speaks and curses now is in the new chronotope. When Job curses his day in verse 1, he is actually cursing the new chronotope rather than his birthday or the old chronotope.⁸ Job uses the old chronotope, which is his birthday, to erase his new and present chronotope, which is his day.

Then, why does Job mention in verse 3 a chronotope that has already passed away as a way to eradicate the new chronotope? The reason is also comprehensible when readers perceive Job's concept of the past, the present and the future in the dialogue section. Job, who is in the estranged chronotope, has a different sense of the present and future from his sense of the present and future in the prologue. In the prologue, Job had hope because he thought that he still had a path by which he could come and

⁶ Clines challenges the traditional understanding of the meaning of the day (Job's birthday) in verse 1 in his commentary. Clines suggests that it is probably either Job's life, his unhappy fate or the day of the disaster. (Clines, *Job 1-20*, 78-79)

⁷ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 250; Esther Peeren, *Intersubjectivities and Popular Culture: Bakhtin and Beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 36.

⁸ The cursing of an already-passed away-event is an odd expression. Clines suggests, "the meaning of 'cursed' here cannot in the end be derived from the lexicon or the theological dictionary but only from the contents of the poem of which it is a headline—including a poetic wish for a curse (אָרַר) in v 8, but also 'why'-questions of reproach against God (vv 11,12,20), and simple lament (vv 24-25)." (Clines, *Job 1-20*, 79)

go in the order of the world: “Naked *came* I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I *return* there” (1:21). However, in the dialogue, Job realizes that he does not have a path to take to somewhere, since God is hiding his way (3:23).

Job recognizes that he is held captive in the present situation and does not have any way to escape from his suffering. Time and space are not clear to him in the estranged chronotope, since time and space are shattered and different from the way they were in his old chronotope. This acknowledgement leads Job to look at his past, which is still familiar to him. By looking at his past, Job assumes that if there had been no past, then there would be no estranged present. To resolve the problem of the estranged chronotope in which he does not have a future or hope he chooses to eradicate his existence. The fastest way to erase his existence is to curse his birthday, according to Job. It is for this reason that Job curses his birthday: in order to erase his present and estranged chronotope.

Specifically, Job’s use of his birthday to curse his day can be explained in the following two ways. First, the language Job uses to curse his day for causing this chronotopic experience is logically developed from the prologue. It is impossible to comprehend or express a newly created chronotope without reflecting on the past chronotope. By cursing or wishing to erase the day of his birth from his calendar, Job wishes to expunge his present life.⁹ The reason for this is that he has been in existence from the day of his birth up until this moment.

Secondly, this understanding of the past, which is the day of his birth in 3:3, is contingent upon his understanding of his “day” in 3:1, the day which marks the onset of Job’s new chronotope. The new chronotope at the present moment influences him to contemplate the day of his birth as one that should never have existed. In other words, the new chronotope introduces a new meaning for the old chronotope for Job: a new meaning which Job was not cognizant of at that time. Job now looks back on his life as recorded up to the end of chapter 2 in a new light. His birthday may once have been a day of hope and full of joy, but the ‘reality’ of the day is not full of joy but instead full of suffering. Job acknowledges the true meaning of the day in the new chronotope. Simply from Job’s malediction on his birthday, readers can conjecture how Job understands his day in the new chronotope. Job’s day in the present causes him to hear the voice of the past which speaks of his birth as the beginning of pain, and

⁹ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 81.

also that of the future, which resounds with hopelessness and speaks of the day as a dead-end.

Job's understanding of the day in the new chronotope is that he is in a chronotope that brings much labor, trouble, pain and turmoil and, therefore, there is no peace, no tranquility, and no rest. A mother's womb is understood as a place where labor, pain, and turmoil begin,¹⁰ not as a place to celebrate and be joyful and festive.¹¹ This understanding is triggered by his perception of the present suffering. Job's present context causes him to view the origin of his life in a different perspective. Job considers a human's origin from a mother's womb as cursed and malicious and the entire life of a human being as full of labor and turmoil. Job's perception is indicative of the movement of time in his space. Since the theory states, "a chronotope stages a genre, which is a form-shaping ideology,"¹² it is possible to read the concept of time in the word "day," which moves Job to shape his ideology concerning his world that is filled with labor, pain and turmoil.

Then, how and with what intention can Job's ideology concerning his world be delivered to his audience and hypothetical audience/super-addressee?¹³ In chapter 3 the way Job expresses himself when he delivers his speech, his choice of language, is multilayered. The language used in Job's speech in chapter 3 delivers both a semantic meaning or content and Job's intention. Through his speech, Job wants his audience to understand what he intends his audience to receive.¹⁴ Job's intention implied in his words could be different from the semantic meaning or content of the words. Although the semantic contents convey Job's desire not to have been born and his want to uproot his whole life, Job's intention, that he wants his audience, including his super-addressee, to understand from

¹⁰ This image is a contrasting image from his day in 1:4 when Job's children held a feast and festival.

¹¹ It could be possible that Job perceived "his day" in Job 1:5 as a day full of joy and festival.

¹² Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 82.

¹³ Superaddressee is Bakhtin's idea concerning a dialogic relationship between a speaker and his or her addressees. Bakhtin considers the dialogic relationship as tripartite. In a dialogic relationship, there are three parties: (1) a speaker, (2) an addressee, and (3) the third party, the superaddressee. The superaddressee is neither you, I, nor the implied reader but the person who understands and becomes a participant in the dialogue either on a special level or at some metaphysical distance or in a distant historical time (Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 43; Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 126). Thus, for Job, the superaddressee is God, because God is the third party in Job's dialogic relationship and participates in the dialogue both on a special level and at a metaphysical distance.

¹⁴ Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words*, 86–116.

these contents, might be his revelation of his self-identity or understanding in the new chronotope.

By means of the malediction of the day of his birth, Job intends to express his perception of the world surrounding him that is filled with labor, pain and turmoil and with that, he wants his readers to recognize that such an understanding of the world is true knowledge/wisdom.¹⁵ Therefore, Job's intention in chapter 3 is to guard his standing as a wise man.¹⁶ Doing this, Job asserts that he still maintains his attributes of being blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil, since the descriptive words for Job's perfect piety are "familiar in proverbial wisdom."¹⁷ At this point, readers may wonder how Job describes himself as a wise man and whether he will succeed in upholding his understanding of himself to the end of *Job*. By studying how Job uses language in the chronotope, Job's self-identity as a wise man in the chapter becomes evident to readers.

Job's Speeches in the Chronotope of Chapter 3

From this section onward, the book analyzes Job's speeches in time and space, because if, as Newsom argues, Job's speech in chapter 3 is his moral imagination,¹⁸

for a truly chronotopic imagination . . . time must be understood in its inter-connection with specific space, and space must be understood as saturated with historical time.¹⁹

What Bakhtin teaches us to see is that all literary language and genres are chronotopic.²⁰ The chronotope of chapter 3 introduces Job as one

¹⁵ This idea is shared with the author of the book of Ecclesiastes (Eccles. 1:12–18).

¹⁶ Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 80–81) sees the speeches of Job and his friends in chapters 3 to 27 as ones in which 'each speaker tends to begin with an observation on the wisdom (or lack thereof) of the preceding speaker and often makes critical judgments on the cogency of the other party's reasoning'.

¹⁷ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 11–12.

¹⁸ Job's speech about his conception and infancy is not born from his own experience, since people cannot recall their life in their mother's womb and their infancy. The knowledge about one's experience in a mother's womb and infancy is dependent on others. Therefore, the day and night of Job's conception and knees and breasts of his infancy are his imagination based upon his knowledge gleaned from others.

¹⁹ Morson and Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 416–17.

²⁰ Bakhtin argues, "Language, as a treasure-house of images, is fundamentally chronotopic. Also, chronotopic is the internal form of the word, that is, the mediating marker with whose help the root meanings of spatial categories are carried over into temporal relationships (in the broadest sense)." (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 251)

who possesses wisdom in a different manner than that of the prologue. If the prologue depicts Job's position as wise within a concretely described space, then chapter 3 affirms Job's position as wise by using his voice/language emerging out of the new chronotope.

Specifically through Job's understanding of time and space, readers of *Job* can easily grasp Job's self-understanding as a wise person, because, according to the concept of the chronotope, space charges and materializes time, and time describes the movement of space. Hence, although readers cannot pinpoint the geographical location where Job makes his speeches, the fact that Job curses his day in chapter 3:1 is indicative of an event or plot taking place in Job's speeches. Therefore, this section will examine the following questions: To whom does chapter 3 attest Job's wisdom? How does the chapter attest Job's wisdom in the chronotope?

To whom does chapter 3 attest Job's wisdom? Chapter 3 originates from Job's mouth (3:1). However, the chapter is unclear as to who Job's addressee(s) is/are. Nevertheless, readers can conjecture that there are three groups of addressees. The first group is Job's three friends. His three friends may be direct addressees because of their presence with Job according to 2:11–13 and Eliphaz's response in chapters 4 and 5, which was provoked by chapter 3,²¹ regardless of Job's intention in his speech.²²

The second addressee is God. Although the chapter does not specifically state that God is with Job and hears Job's speeches, both *Job* and Job assume that God hears Job's speeches as an over-hearer and superaddressee.²³ Chapter 3:20²⁴ and 23²⁵ imply that God's hand is behind Job's present situation because Job's suffering is a sign of divine presence rather than absence.²⁶

²¹ Andersen, *Job*, p. 110; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 124.

²² It is unclear whom Job is addressing in chapter 3. The chapter is unclear whether Job addresses his speech to his friends or to God or to nobody, but readers can at least assume that Job's speeches exist for his addressees because "every simple speech is fundamentally 'for the other, since language is directly the "making known of one's Self for others."'" (Hugh C. White, *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991], 13).

²³ See 89n 13.

²⁴ 3:20 does not clarify who is the subject providing both light and life to the laborer or sufferer and man. However, readers can easily assume that the subject may be God, because God is understood as the one who provides light and life to people in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 1; Ps. 36:10; Isa. 45:7).

²⁵ Unlike 3:20, verse 23 directly mentions that God covers Job's way, so that Job cannot see it.

²⁶ Katharine J. Dell sees a storm on the sea in Jonah 1.4f as a sign of divine presence rather than absence (e.g. Pss. 29; 77:16f; 97:2–5; 107:23f; 148:7–8). (Katharine J. Dell, *The*

The last group is *Job's* readers.²⁷ Actually, *Job's* readers might be regarded as *Job's* addressees rather than *Job's* hearers, but *Job's* readers can be considered as *Job's* over-hearers, listening in on the dialogue, who have knowledge that neither *Job* nor his friends have; they know about the heavenly council in chapters 1 and 2.²⁸ They are also *Job's* addressees who must respond to *Job's* speeches. In other words, *Job's* readers read *Job's* speeches *as if* they are *Job's* addressees, since they play a similar role²⁹ as that of *Job's* addressees. Therefore, as addressees, the three groups³⁰ of *Job's*/*Job's* readers may question: What does *Job* mean in his speech in chapter 3? Why does *Job* speak in such a manner?

Job 3 can be demarcated into three pericopes: *Job* 3:3³¹–10; 11–19; 20–26.³² *Job* 3:3–10 is *Job's* speech erasing the day and night when he was conceived, thereby wishing his mother's womb had been barren. *Job* 3:11–19 depicts *Job's* regret at his birth through the use of such words as “knees,” “breasts,” “now” and “there.” These words also reveal *Job's* wish to uproot his infancy from his past. Finally, *Job* 3:20–26 is *Job's* speech about his present life that is filled with misery and trouble and bereft of peace. Clearly, *Job* describes himself as one whose path or way has been hidden by God. As a result, the place where he can find joy is, paradoxically, the grave.

Book of Job as Sceptical Literature [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991], 156) Thus, *Job's* suffering can be understood as evidence of God's presence rather than His absence.

²⁷ There could be three different groups of readers for *Job*: *historical* readers, *implied* readers and *contemporary* readers. This book is most interested in contemporary readers.

²⁸ *Job's* readers' foreknowledge may help them to *empathize* with *Job* more than his friends with respect to *Job's* innocence and his question about why God is making him suffer. Bakhtin explains that to empathize with others is possible in an aesthetic sense. “The emotional and volitional tones which pervade this visible world of objects are tones of suffering. What I have to do is to experience and consummate him aesthetically (ethical actions, such as assistance, rescue, consolation, are excluded in this case). The first step in aesthetic activity is my projecting myself into him and experiencing his life from within him.” (Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 25)

²⁹ As *Job's* three friends received and made sense of *Job's* speeches, *Job's* readers receive and try to make sense of *Job's* speeches. This idea is an important element in this book because the purpose of the book is to examine the process used by *Job* and his friends in their speeches to receive and understand each other's speeches and to evaluate how that same process applies to *Job's* readers in receiving and understanding the text.

³⁰ In this group, the book includes God. It is possible for some modern readers to think that God already knows the reason for *Job's* speech, but since the prologue of the book defines God in his ambiguous nature (1:12; 2:3–6), it is possible for us to think of God with the other two groups.

³¹ The first two verses in chapter 3 are the narrator's voice. At this point, the section focuses on *Job's* voice.

³² Clearly, readers can see minor divisions within these major strophes. Several commentaries provide various demarcations of the minor divisions. (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 75–76; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 103).

Throughout these pericopes, readers can recognize that there is a shift in the chapter. It is apparent that the place and time which Job depicts in each pericope move from Job's origin to his present time. Job's speech in chapter 3 shifts from the place and time of his conception through his infancy to the place and time of his present situation. The shifting of the place and time in Job's focus in each pericope plays a significant role in conveying Job's implication concerning his suffering and identity in the chronotope. In effect, the shift rolls the meanings from the first pericope over to the last pericope producing a snowball effect, enabling Job to deliver his understanding of the present situation to his addressees more powerfully and effectively. Then, what does Job intend to convey in the shifting of place and time in each pericope?

In the first pericope, as a way to uproot the day and night when he was conceived and when he was born, Job speaks to darken that day and night by using such words as חשך, צלמות,³³ במרירי,³⁴ אפל,³⁵ which mean darkness, or deep, gloomy darkness. The following verses accurately present the mood of Job's articulation as the means for erasing the contrast and rhythm of day and night. Job says, "Let that day be darkness"³⁶ (verse 4) and "That night—Let thick darkness seize it" (verse 6). Why does Job choose to darken the day and night to annul his conception from the past?

Job's time materializes through the spatial language he uses in chapter 3, which is "womb," and not just any womb, but *his* mother's womb (verse 10). Chronotopically, his mother's womb has a temporal meaning as well as a spatial meaning, which is here represented by day and night. If there had been no specific day and night, there would be no womb or the opening of his mother's womb. The way in which day and night controls the

³³ The word has a meaning related to the words חשך and אפל, because the word appears with the words חשך and אפל as a pair in several places (Job 10:21 (with חשך); 28:3 (with אפל); Ps. 107:10 (with חשך); 14 (with חשך)).

³⁴ The meaning of the word is ambiguous. Gordis translates the word as 'the demons [of day]', (Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 33) and Pope chooses 'eclipses' as its meaning (Pope, *Job*, 29) then Clines seems to follow Pope in his commentary (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 68 and 70) and Habel follows Gordis (Habel, *Job*, p. 100). However, this book chooses 'darkness' as its meaning, as BDB suggests (BDB, 485), because in 3.5, the book sees parallelism between חשך וצלמות and במרירי יום כמרירי יום which means darkness and gloomy: יגאלהו חשך וצלמות תשכן-עליו עננה יבעתהו כמרירי יום : ABCDA'B').

³⁵ Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 28), Pope (*Job*, 26), Habel (*Job*, 99) and Clines (*Job* 1–20, 68) seem to agree with 'deep, sinister, or gloomy darkness' as the meaning of the word.

³⁶ As I have already mentioned in chapter 1, the English translation of the Hebrew Bible is from the NRSV.

movement of space is clearly described in Gen. 1. From Gen. 1:3 where God initiated his creative act to Gen. 2:3 where He ceases it, readers can recognize that God's creative actions move in an evening-morning framework, which is night to day. Day and night function to display the smooth, orderly moving process of God's creation. Therefore, without nights and days in Gen.1, there would be no created space or place. In a reversal of this creative act, Job curses the specific day and night when he was conceived in order to erase his space. In uprooting his mother's womb where he was formed, Job seeks also to expunge his time in the past.

In verses 3–10, Job also uses light and darkness together with day and night to eradicate his birth. Why does he use these words with day and night? If day and night give meaning to his mother's womb, light and darkness give meaning to the day and night. Light is an essential element for the existence of the day when he was conceived. If there was no light, the day would cease to exist and, if there was deep darkness in the night, the next day would never come (*Job* 3:5–6). In this way, Job uses darkness as an effective instrument to erase the rhythm of day and night. For Job, this is the only logical and sound way to destroy his day. Gen. 1:2 clearly depicts the earth as formless and empty and darkness was on the deep before God initiated his creative act. By God's creating light and conquering darkness, the first day was created. Therefore, when Job says the day becomes dark and the night becomes darker, he wants to reverse the day and night to the pre-creation stage where there was only darkness. When there was only darkness, there was no life because there was no light.³⁷

Then why does Job start with his mother's womb in order to express his wish to destroy his new chronotope? His mother's womb marks the origin of his existence and metaphorically signals the place where he will eventually return. From the womb he emerged and to the womb he shall return. Job confesses in 1:21 that this is the order which has been established by God (cf. Gen. 3:19). Since such is the order, Job expects to return to the womb. However, his expectation in 1:21 fails to be met in the new chronotope (cf. *Job* 3:23). Apparently, the order in 1:21 has been utterly shattered in the new chronotope. Therefore, Job curses the day and night when he was conceived by wanting darkness to reign over light and night, so that he might remain in a state of non-existence rather than coming

³⁷ In the Hebrew Bible, light often symbolises life. Cf. Esther 8:16; Pss. 27:1; 56:13; Prov. 6:23; Lam. 3:1–4 (no light-death); Amos 5:18, 20; Mic. 7:8.

out from his mother's womb, because he knows that he would never be able to return there in the new chronotope.

Further, Job perceives his mother's womb as the entrance to his troubles (3:10). Generally speaking, a mother's womb is the first place one resides in before coming out into the world. Therefore, for Job, the womb is like a door to access another place. The womb clearly provides Job with the meaning of entering a new place. Particularly, the imagery of the womb as a door connotes the point of transition from one chronotope to the other and also the midpoint between the two chronotopes. Since time charges the place so that Job can be moved to the other chronotope, Job's first step in eradicating the womb in his past is to delete that time and space in order to be able to face the new chronotope.

However, it is undeniable that Job cannot reverse the present space and time back to a space and time where and when he had not been born. So he changes his speech from a jussive speech form, which expresses his wishes,³⁸ to a question speech form which implies his regrets. In the second pericope, or verses 11–19, Job wishes that he had died at birth. If he had died, then he would be in peace with rich, noble people in death. In concrete terms, Job expresses his regrets over his birth and being alive by alluding to the spatial dimension of the words "knees" and "breasts." Job blames the knees and breasts that received and nursed him. If knees and breasts had never received and nursed him, he would be lying down and sleeping in peace and would be in a place with rest and no troubles.

Actually, both knees and breasts are multilayered words in the chronotope. In the chronotope, Job understands both knees and breasts as the place of his being taken care of and being protected and as a time when he was growing up. The shift from the womb to knees and breasts indicates that Job has moved from one place and time to another place and time. Therefore, both knees and breasts themselves signal that Job occupied that space and spent time in the past. In this way, these words evince that Job's curse on his birthday in the first pericope is meaningless because even to be able to utter the curse depends on his having been born and nurtured. He cannot undo the past and only the future awaits him.

Interestingly enough, in verses 11–15 and verses 16–19, Job repeats his wish that he should have died when he was born then he would be at

³⁸ The jussive form expresses a command, a wish (or a blessing), advice or a request in affirmative sentences. Particularly, the form expresses a wish after particles (GKC, § 109 b). In *Job* 3:3–9, Job's use of the jussive form may be understood as an expression more of a wish than a command.

peace. Job focuses on the one hand in 11–15 on the temporal side and on the other in 16–19 on the spatial. In verse 13, Job portrays his temporal situation. If knees and breasts had never received or nursed him, Job would *now* be able to lie down in peace. In this way of understanding, by using the temporal word “now” (עתה), Job does not want to separate his present time and his ideal time. He wants to replace his present time with his ideal time. However, Job acknowledges that this effort is meaningless. Job’s acknowledgment becomes apparent in his spatial imagination in verses 17–19. If he had been a stillborn baby, he would be *there* where there is rest, no troubles and no pressures. So, Job mentions that the place where he wishes to be is *there* instead of *here*. The word, there (שם), undoubtedly points to the separation between Job’s present space and his ideal space. By shifting from a temporal word to a spatial word, Job reveals that his ideal chronotope is escaping from him³⁹ and the reality is imminent. Due to this acknowledgment, Job seeks death in the present time and place. He shifts his focus from the past to the present. He passionately desires the grave. Job would rather be in the grave, because his life is so full of miseries and troubles and is devoid of peace, rest or quietness. Death alone will bring peace, rest and quietness.

At this point, it is possible for *Job’s*/Job’s addressees to ask the following question: What is Job’s intention in the speech? Without a doubt, when Job utters the words in the text, he expects that his audiences will receive and understand his utterances or speeches according to his intention.⁴⁰ To grasp or decipher Job’s addressees’ understanding of the intention or implication embedded in his speech, *Job’s* readers conjecture that Job’s audiences consciously or unconsciously depend on their extraverbal context and their relevancy to Job’s language. Why do Job’s friends depend on their extraverbal context?

The meaning of language is determined by how others receive what is said and the act of receiving what is said happens in the extraverbal context.⁴¹ Without comprehending the extraverbal context, it would be

³⁹ Job’s perception of the escape of his idealistic chronotope also implies the meaning that his expectation to return there in *Job* 1:21 has failed. We will discuss more about Job’s different perceptions of the spatial image ‘there’ (שם) in chapters 4 and 5.

⁴⁰ Kent Bach, “Conversational Implicature,” *Mind & Language* 9 (1994): 156.

⁴¹ Bakhtin sees the extraverbal context as an essential element to decide the meaning of words or language and identifies the following as essential elements of the extraverbal context: the common spatial purview between addresser and addressee, common knowledge and understanding of the situation, and their common evaluation. (Wheelock, “Drunk and Disorderly,” 9: She quotes from Bakhtin, “Discourse in Life and Discourse in

unfeasible for Job, his friends and even *Job's* readers⁴² to read the speeches of Job and his friends and to make sense of them. If it were impossible for Job, his friends and *Job's* readers to hear/read each other's speeches, there would be no communication.

Apart from the extraverbal context, there is another required component, which is the relationship to language displayed by the characters to *Job's* readers. This component is also essential, because it is possible that what is said and what is meant are different and both could be received differently by different characters.⁴³ The relationship to language can also be defined as the language competency of both a speaker and a hearer. Language competency is also understandable in terms of shared social linguistic conventions. Within the context of shared common social linguistic conventions, Job and his friends can communicate their meanings and intentions through their speech.⁴⁴ Grice shows how this communication between a speaker and a hearer happens within the context of common social linguistic conventions through his four maxims.

As we have already seen in chapter 2 of the book, Grice establishes four maxims which set out a speaker's obligations if he or she wishes to communicate effectively.⁴⁵ According to these maxims, when Job delivers his speech his hearers can expect that Job is adhering to these maxims. When hearers' expectations are breached, they may deduce that Job is speaking in an ironic, paradoxical, mad or erroneous way, which then prompts

Art," in *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, ed. R.C. David and R. Schleifer [New York: Longman, 1998], 475).

⁴² It is true that the extraverbal context of Job and his addressees and that of *Job's* readers are different.

⁴³ Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words*.

⁴⁴ White (*Narration and Discourse*, 44–45) says, "With the initiation of dialogue, the speaker assumes that the hearer will accede to the position which s/he assumes for her/himself. This position operates within the subject on four 'registers,' according to Flahault: the unconscious, the ideological (hierarchical, social system), the constraints of the situation of the specific utterance, and *the circulation of signs within the dialogical interchange between the allocutory partners* (which affects the previous three). . . . If the hearer does not accede to them in the fourth register of the dialogical process, then the conversation will soon be *terminated*." The emphases are added.

⁴⁵ I would like to remind my readers of the Gricean maxims. 1. Quantity—a) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange); b) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required: 2. Quality—"Try to make your contribution one that is true" a) Do not say what you believe to be false; b) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence: 3. Relation—"Be Relevant": 4. "Be perspicuous" a) Avoid obscurity of expression; b) Avoid ambiguity; c) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); d) Be orderly. (Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words*, 26–27). These maxims operate in both speakers' and audiences' cognitive environments whether they recognize it or not.

them to search for different implications than the semantic meanings of the language used. Such expectations or assumptions help audiences or listeners recognize Job's possible intention.

No matter how the maxims are kept or broken by speakers, the maxims presuppose that Job and his audience share a common socio-linguistic convention, as Hugh C. White affirms:

every linguistic expression is oriented not only toward the referent, but also the implicit meaning associated with linguistic form which is shared by the interlocutors as members of the same linguistic community. Expression thus must presuppose and arise from an implicit event of mutual recognition between subjects in which each subject comes to self-recognition.⁴⁶

According to this, *Job's* readers have to assume that Job and his audience in the text operate according to the same socio-linguistic conventions. This inference provokes readers to decipher the shared commonality to understand the text according to the readers' own cognitive process of relevance.⁴⁷ Yet it is undeniable that the characters in the text and its readers may share neither common socio-cultural conventions nor the extraverbal conditions that Grice expects. Characters, or readers, may see a breach of the maxims where none was intended and so misinterpret a simple statement as an ironic one, for instance. Readers for their part may see this mismatch, which might be a deliberate strategy by the author to show the failure of the characters to communicate, or may reflect a further level of misconception on the part of readers. Readers inevitably use their ideologies or moral imaginations shaped in their own socio-cultural environments and context to fill any communicative gaps existing between the characters or between characters and readers. Being triggered by socio-cultural conditions expressed in linguistic form, readers try to ascertain the meaning out of the possible intentions of Job in the book of *Job* within their own social-cultural context, which may not reflect the original context.⁴⁸ Yet readers may also be fully aware of the clash between characters' understandings of each other and the readers' understanding of the characters.

Due to this potential hiatus existing between characters and readers, in this book we need to distinguish between Job's voice for the characters

⁴⁶ White, *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*, 77.

⁴⁷ Grice, *Studies in the Way of Words*, 225.

⁴⁸ According to Bakhtin, this is the reason why utterances or languages are infinite, unfinalized. Utterances or languages have new and different meanings according to readers'/audiences' different contexts in which utterances or languages are read.

and the voice of the book of *Job* for present readers. According to Bakhtin's dialogic approach to the book, readers can hear at least two different voices. First, readers can hear that Job wants his audiences—his friends, and the super-addressee, who is God—to grasp his intentions by understanding the manner in which his speech is expressed. Second, at the same time, through these speeches out of silence in *Job* 3:1–4, *Job* may provoke readers as its addressees to figure out what intention the book wants to deliver to its readers. Job communicates to his audiences; *Job* communicates to the readers.

First, what is Job implying to his hearers? Job's intention is for his friends to understand how intense his suffering is and have compassion on him. In chapter 3, *Job's* readers may envision according to Grice's maxims that Job's friends are acknowledging, whether consciously or unconsciously, that Job does not mean what he says in the speech, because Job's speech violates the Gricean maxim of quality and quantity. First, in verses 3–10, Job's speech breaks the Gricean maxim of quality by making a contribution that is not true. It is not true that Job can darken the day and night for God created light/day and darkness/night. At the same time, it is not possible to reverse the time since the day of his birth for this is an event that has already occurred. Therefore, Job's friends can assume that Job is trying to convey a totally different meaning from his actual speech.

Then, what exactly does Job want his hearers to understand from his speech? It is clear to Job's friends and God that Job is talking about a barren womb in 3:3–10. Erasing the day and night when Job was conceived and born indicates Job's wish to make his parents barren. Verses 7 and 10 in particular provide further support for this. Why does Job want his parents to be barren? The reason is that, while in most cases a barren womb or being barren was typically deemed undesirable in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 25:21; 29:31–32; 30:1; Exod. 23:25–26; Deut. 7:14; etc.), in some other instances in the Hebrew Bible, a barren womb or being barren was considered desirable. Isa. 54:1 is one such case. This verse encourages a woman with a barren womb to sing aloud because she is not in labor because it is better not to bring a child into the world to suffer (in the case of Isa. 54 the suffering is the imminent destruction of Jerusalem). According to Isa. 53:12 and 54:1, a barren womb becomes desirable, especially during times of severe suffering or pain.⁴⁹ For this reason, Job reflects his desire that his

⁴⁹ This idea is expressed very clearly in the New Testament. Luke 23:29 says "For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that

mother's womb had been a barren womb because of the severe suffering and pain he comes to endure. In other words, Job uses the celebration of the image of a barren womb to accentuate his pain.⁵⁰

Second, Job violates a Gricean maxim of quantity in verses 11, 12 and 20. In verses 11, 12, and 20, Job uses a question form: "Why did I not die at birth, come forth from the womb and expire?" (v. 11). "Why were there knees to receive me, or breasts for me to suck?" (v. 12). "Why is light given to one in misery, and life to the bitter in soul?" (v. 20). These questions go beyond information that is required for the current purposes of the exchange and they are not as informative as is required, because information is not available to both the speaker and the hearers. Therefore, Job's hearers may recognize that Job's questions in verses 11, 12 and 20 highlight his emotions with respect to his present life. These questions convey Job's feeling of being disappointed, sad, regretful and angry.

Why does Job use both the image of a barren womb and the question speech form to adumbrate the pain in his body and his emotions? First, the answer as to why Job uses the image of a barren womb is that there is no language to deliver the first-hand experience of one's pain to those who are not in pain. According to Elaine Scarry, "there is no language for pain," since pain destroys language. However,

though there is ordinarily no language for pain, under the pressure of the desire to eliminate pain, an at least fragmentary means of verbalization is available both to those who are themselves in pain and to those who wish to speak on behalf of others.⁵¹

Job uses the language of uprooting his birthday to eliminate his pain and at the same time wants his hearers to make a new language to speak for him of his innocence (cf. *Job* 6:10; 9:15, 20, 21; 10:7, 15). In 3:3–11, Job intends his hearers to grasp his implication for his friends to plead for his innocence and speak on his behalf, thereby eliminating his pain. The relationship between physical pain and language to express it and the

never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.'" Gal. 4:27 quotes Isa. 54:1 to express a similar idea.

⁵⁰ It is possible that Job wants to express his strong emotions concerning his pain. According to the neuro-psycho-social theory of speech, people use cursing words 'to express strong emotions and/or produce an emotional impact on a listener'. Therefore, cursing words are used 'for emotional or connotative purposes... because they offer linguistic information about emotions in order to affect comprehension processes'. (Timothy Jay, *Why We Curse: A Neuro-Psycho-Social Theory of Speech* [Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999], 9–11)

⁵¹ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 13.

relationship between those who are in pain and those who are not in pain are clearly instantiated by Scarry. She says:

Amnesty International's ability to bring about the cessation of torture depends centrally on its ability to communicate the reality of physical pain to those who are not themselves in pain. When, for example, one receives a letter from Amnesty in the mail, the words of that letter must somehow convey to the reader the aversiveness being experienced inside the body of someone whose country may be far away, whose name can barely be pronounced, and whose ordinary life is unknown except that it is known that that ordinary life has ceased to exist. The language of the letter must also resist and overcome the inherent pressures toward tonal instability: that language must at once be characterized by the greatest possible tact (for the most intimate realm of another human being's body is implicit or explicit subject) and by the greatest possible immediacy (for the most crucial fact about pain is *its presentness* and the most crucial fact about torture is that it *is happening*). . . . The goal of a letter is not simply to make the reader a passive recipient of information about torture but to encourage his or her active assistance in eliminating torture. The "reader of the letter" may now, for example, become the "writer of a letter": that is, the person may begin to use his own language . . . to address appropriate government officials or others who may have the authority to stop the torture.⁵²

Moreover, Scarry provides another example illustrating what speaking on behalf of the sufferers is like.

. . . A fourth arena in which physical pain begins to enter language is the courtroom. . . . For the moment it is enough simply to notice that, whatever else is true, such litigation provides a situation that once again requires that the *impediments to expressing pain be overcome*. Under the pressure of this requirement, the lawyer, too, becomes *an inventor of language*, one who speaks *on behalf of* another person (the plaintiff) and attempts to communicate the reality of that person's physical pain to people who are not themselves in pain (the jurors).⁵³

According to this relationship between pain and language and the sufferers and those who are not in pain, 3:3–10 connotes Job's intention for his hearers, at least his friends, to understand the severity of his pain, to write or form a speech explicitly expressing his present suffering and to appeal or pray on his behalf to the one who is causing the torture or pain to stop it.

⁵² Ibid., 9. The emphases are original.

⁵³ Ibid., 10. The emphases are added.

Second, Job uses the question form of speech to shift from a jussive form in verses 11, 12 and 20 and provides a reason for his friends to plead on his behalf to eliminate the suffering/pain. In verses 11–19, Job reveals his feelings of sadness, disappointment, regret, and even anger in the present situation that he is still alive in the space. So, his language shifts from speaking from the place where he was about to be conceived to the place where he was born and to the place where he is now. The shifting of locality indicates the intensity or urgency of Job's message. Unlike verses 3–10, Job literally uses the word death (מות) in the second pericope. He regrets not dying as soon as he was born (verses 11, 12 and 16). The reason clearly surfaces in verses 13, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 19. Job confesses that if he had died in his mother's womb, he would be in peace now. Job explicitly fantasizes about death in these verses. According to Job, death may provide him with not only peace, rest and tranquility but also the fellowship of the most valuable of all company such as kings, ministers of state⁵⁴ and rich princes.⁵⁵ Just as Job uses the image of barrenness in a reversal of the traditional meaning in the Hebrew Bible to highlight his suffering and pain, so he fantasizes about death in a way that contrasts with the traditional concept of death/Sheol in the Hebrew Bible to render his present space the worst possible place.⁵⁶

Further, Job explains why he has such a fantasy about death in verses 20–26. Job describes his situation in the present space. He proclaims that there is neither ease nor quietness nor rest for him in the present place but only troubles (רגז). In particular, because his way is hidden by God (אשר דרכו נסתרה ויסך אלוה בעדו), there is no way out and nowhere to go. In other words, he is in a state of paralysis.⁵⁷ He cannot walk the way he usually walked. He is confined and cannot move. Consequently, because of the suffering inflicted on him in the present, Job understands himself as a man who is trapped in a place from which there is no escape. Thus, Job clearly declares that only his death can remove his suffering and lead him to peace, rest, and tranquility and his friends can create a language at this point to plead for death on his behalf as a way to put an end to his suffering.

However, the function of Job's language in chapter 3 does not cease with the voice of supplication on his behalf for death to eliminate his suf-

⁵⁴ This is Clines's translation (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 68).

⁵⁵ Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 70.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

fering but introduces more voices for Job. Job's speech implies his struggle to create a new language/word (דבר) to bring a new order to his estranged chronotope because his old language has already been broken by suffering and pain and his way is blocked. In other words, chapter 3 reflects Job's exertion to create a language/word to rebuild the way, given that God has hedged him in and covered his way.⁵⁸ In uncovering the way by creating his own language, Job can be understood as a wise man because God's glory, honor and wisdom is to conceal things (דבר), but a king's glory, honor and wisdom is to search things (דבר) out (Prov. 25.2).⁵⁹

How does Job uncover the way which God has concealed? As aforementioned, Job's language moves in a very orderly fashion in chapter 3 from conception through infancy to his present life. Each movement reveals a meaning that is distinctly contrasted with the traditional meaning in the Hebrew Bible concerning a barren womb and death. In other words, Job uses language in an orderly way to destroy his present life and its pain. The purpose behind his use of destructive language for life is to build a new way in a new chronotope.⁶⁰ Rather than malediction or curse or regret, Job's language in chapter 3 represents his only recourse if he is ever going to build a new way.

According to 2:13 Job nearly loses his language in his place, but he regains his language by opening his mouth to speak in an estranged place in 3:1. In order to restore or reorder his lost or chaotic space, Job needs to destroy his estranged space in the new chronotope. Using the temporal and spatial words he does, Job clarifies his intentions to reorder his

⁵⁸ Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 131) understands Job's speeches as 'the brilliance of light refracted through shattered glass of many colors'. However, I think that Job's speeches are more than the brilliance of light refracted through shattered glass of many colors. Job's speeches are a new language designed to build up a new world.

⁵⁹ כבוד אלהים הסתר דבר וכבוד מלכים חקר דבר.

⁶⁰ Mathewson (*Death and Survival in the book of Job*) understands Job in pain as his survival from suffering by struggling to articulate a new symbolic system, and sees the book of *Job* in the process of symbolization-desymbolization-resymbolization of Job's death and life. I agree with his theory, but I have a different idea concerning the methodology to develop the idea. His work is based upon Lifton's theory, which resulted from social field work with survivors of war. He applies Lifton's theory to the book of *Job* to see how Job survives by desymbolizing death and resymbolizing his life because of his presupposition that Job's suffering and surviving has a resonance with the contemporary age (Ibid., 2). However, we must be careful because it may be possible that the concept of suffering and death in the contemporary age is different from that of the ancient biblical age. Also, I think that since Job is a character who lives in language/words, we need to analyze how Job handles his sufferings by looking at how he uses language. By examining Job's words/language, we can fill the gap existing between the ancient document and the present readers.

chronotope by destroying the new chronotope. First, in his use of the temporal words, we can see how Job reveals his intention to reorder the new chronotope. Job curses the day when he was conceived. He curses light and darkness, which coexisted on the day of his conception. In the pericope, the time when Job cursed the day of his conception succeeds the seven days and seven nights of silence (2:13). In the new chronotope, after the seven days and nights had passed, Job opens his mouth and curses the day, which had already passed. In doing so, Job essentially tries to return to the day of his origin when he was about to be formed. This chronological order—returning to the past—highlights Job's intention to go back to his regulated world.⁶¹

In the beginning when God created heaven and earth in Gen. 1, the very first day is mentioned after God created light and separated it from darkness. From then on, the temporal indicator "day" (יום) appeared continually in the creation story. On the seventh day, the creation story ceased. God's creative act was completed on the seventh day and God ceased his creative work. Since then, readers construe that the time cycle of day-night and night-day carries on. Consequently, readers can surmise that there was no time or time cycle before God's words appeared to create the light, but that after He (His words) created the light, time commenced its cycle. That is to say, that from the first cycle of seven days and nights in God's creative act, the day and night time cycle was introduced into the world.

Job's case in chapter 3, however, deviates from the creation time cycle. Before Job opens his mouth to curse his day in 3:1, there was a cycle of seven-days-and-nights⁶² in 2:13. After the seven-days-and-nights-time cycle, Job speaks to destroy the day and night or light and darkness which controls the time cycle. In summary, the relationship of God to time shows the following order: no time cycle-[God's] words-time cycle, while that of Job shows the reverse order of time cycle-[Job's] words-no time cycle. Further, this temporal order of Job's language clearly makes visible how his

⁶¹ The idea of destruction for construction can be better understood through the idea of *metalepsis*. The idea of *metalepsis* is to sacrifice "what is distant in time and space in order to preserve what is near." This idea comes from Kierkegaard's identification of the story of Abraham in Gen. 22 in *Fear and Trembling* (Chris Danta, "The Poetics of Distance: Kierkegaard's Abraham," *Literature & Theology* 21 (2007): 160, 172). Danta (*Ibid.*, 172) explains in depth the idea of *metalepsis* from Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* and explains how Job is the best instance of *metalepsis*.

⁶² Besides 2:13 where the seven-days-and-nights-cycle is clearly described, 1:1–5 also depicts the regularity of Job's life or time cycle and this includes the number seven.

spatial language concerning the order of God's creative act and the order of Job's destructive act both move in the chronotope.

Just as the temporal language used here reveals the relationship between the order of Job's life and his language, the spatial language likewise highlights this relationship. As God created the cosmos by destroying the chaotic, Job seeks to destroy his estranged space to create a new way.⁶³ In Gen. 1:2, the world was formless, empty and dark. Then God's voice appears without any spatial forms. There was only God's voice heard in Gen. 1. God's voice created the cosmos. Thus, the order of God's creative act is the following: disorder-voice/word-order/cosmos.

Job's case is the opposite. Job's life began with order in 1:1–5. However, his orderly life started to shatter. Eventually, there was nothing left for Job, not even words in 2:13. But Job opens his mouth and starts to speak in 3:1–2. Job's voice is the only one heard in chapter 3⁶⁴ just as God's voice is the only one heard in Gen. 1:2–31. However, Job's voice creates disorder, destruction, darkness, death and emptiness. Job's creative act for a new world moves from order to disorder, which is the opposite of God's creative way.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, Job does not choose the opposite way completely. Just as God created heaven and earth with his wisdom,⁶⁶ Job's use of language to create disorder in his space can also be perceived as wisdom. A comparison of the order of language in God's creative act with that in Job's creative act helps us to understand Job's language as wise.⁶⁷ While God's creative act starts with disorder, formlessness, void and darkness and ends with a cosmos after his words, Job's creative act starts with order, his regular lifecycle in *Job* 1:1–5 and 2:13 and ends with disorder, darkness, death and chaos after his words. In this comparison, we can notice

⁶³ Timothy K. Beal delivers a similar idea in his statement, "I dare say that there is no detectable undercurrent of hope that the return to chaos will be a prelude to a new creation." Timothy K. Beal, *Religion and Its Monsters* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 44.

⁶⁴ It is difficult to consider the narrator's voice in 3:1–2 as an actual voice in the chapter. The narrator's voice plays its role in guiding readers' attention to Job's action which is opening his mouth to speak, since *Job* is a written document on paper. If Job was being staged as a play, the narrator's voice might not be needed.

⁶⁵ Beal supports this concept of Job reversing God's creation in Genesis 1. He states, "God's first act of creation called forth light ('or) from darkness (*hoshek*). Job draws it back into darkness, undoing the first creative distinction God had made out of the formless void." Beal, *Religion and Its Monsters*, 41.

⁶⁶ Prov. 3:19.

⁶⁷ Cf. Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theological in the Book of Job*, JSOTSup 112 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1991), 56–60.

a distinct pattern: disorder-word-order (God)/order-word-disorder (Job) and in this pattern, we can recognize a certain parallelism. If we place these two opposing sequences on the same horizontal plane, we can recognize that order succeeds disorder and subsequently disorder succeeds order: disorder-(word)-order-(word)-disorder. At this point, readers may anticipate order to ensue after the last disorder. Therefore, in Job's speech in chapter 3, readers can conjecture that Job intends his addressees to perceive his attempt to reorder his life through disorder in his estranged chronotope through language.

Second, what does *Job* convey to its readers? To begin with, *Job's* voice in 3:1 provides us with a hint with respect to *Job's* intention by using a non-conventional phrase⁶⁸—Job opens his mouth (פִּתַּח אִיּוֹב אֶת פִּיָּהּ). *Job* depicts Job as beginning a serious speech⁶⁹ at the end of the seven days' and nights' silence. In the new chronotope, *Job* may intend its readers to perceive Job as fulfilling his responsibility or answerability,⁷⁰ given that he still has his *nefesh*. By mentioning Job's opening his mouth to speak, *Job* reflects that Job does not lose his ability to author himself and others, including his situation and his friends. Job speaks to respond *fairly*⁷¹ to what he heard⁷² and did not hear⁷³ during the seven days and nights. By portraying Job's answerability, *Job* intends to depict Job as the one who determines his identity and surrounding circumstances and specifically portrays Job as the one who authors his new chronotope in order to reorganize it wisely. By presenting Job's authorial voice, *Job* invites its readers to compare God's voice to Job's voice.

⁶⁸ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 78.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Bakhtin sees answerability in a relationship between the author and hero (character). Answerability is an active responsibility to make utterances meaningful. All responsive utterances are not passive but an active participation in what they read and hear. (cf. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*)

⁷¹ Mandolfo (*Daughter Zion Talks Back to the Prophets*, 13) says, 'Part of the job of authoring others involves listening to them as *responsibly* as we can, listening and responding *fairly*'.

⁷² According to 1:14–19, it is even clearer that Job hears the other tragic news from messengers rather than witnessing the tragic events himself, but the second trial, which came upon his body, he experiences in his physical body.

⁷³ During the seven days and nights, Job's friends had no words to say to Job. We have two possible explanations concerning Job's friends' silence in 2:13. First, it is not necessary for silence to speak. Silence itself delivers a message. Silence is a soundless voice. Second, in 2:13, it is clear that Job's friends do not utter a word but it is not clear whether they are absolutely quiet. We need to distinguish between no words and silence. It may be possible that the friends just mourned with sounds but without words. If his friends mourned with sounds, that could have delivered a meaningful message to Job.

Through this comparison, *Job* supports Job's appeal to his being wise. Particularly through wordplay, the book of *Job* highlights Job's wisdom or skill.⁷⁴ *Job* intentionally incorporates wordplay to identify Job in a similar way to those who possess skill and knowledge when he curses the day (יום) or sea (ים)⁷⁵ and masterful skill when he rouses up Leviathan in 3.2 and 3.8.⁷⁶ *Job*'s voice evinces Job's wisdom and skill by appealing to what readers already know.

Just as God's voice alone is heard out of nowhere when He creates heaven and earth in Gen. 1, and, in particular, when He creates light and calls light day on the first day, Job's voice alone is heard out of nowhere in chapter 3 when he wants to destroy light and his day. The narrative frame in verses 1 and 2 and Job's voice in verse 3 mirror the image of God's actions at creation in Gen. 1:1–5. Job's voice wanting to destroy light and day and to reverse them to primordial chaos can be understood as the opposite image to that of God's action of creating order out of primordial chaos.⁷⁷

This comparison of Job's voice to that of God's in creation provides audiences with a glimpse into Job's space in chapter 3 in the following way. In this space-less place, Job's voice deals with a cosmogonic prototype. By reversing the order of creation with his voice, *Job* reflects Job's voice indirectly challenging God's wisdom at creation and displaying his own power in wisdom, since creation was produced from God's wisdom as Ps. 104:24, Prov. 3:19, and 8:22–31 profess and the negative or destructive side of God's action at creation can be effectively rendered as more powerful than God's creative act itself in the audiences' mind.⁷⁸ In this way, *Job* shows that Job's voice dealing with the cosmogonic prototype and its imagery evinces Job's wisdom.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Not by coincidence wisdom means "masterful understanding," "expertise," and "skill" in the Hebrew Bible. (Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004], 83–87). "Outside of Proverbs, the word *hokma* is used, for example, of technical and artistic skill (Exod 28:3; 31:6), of the arts of magic (Exod 7:11; Isa 3:3), of government (Eccl 4:13; Jer 50:35), and of diplomacy (1Kgs 5:7 [HB 5:21])" (Bruce K. Waltke, "Righteousness in Proverbs," *Westminster Theological Journal* 70 (2008): 228).

⁷⁵ Some scholars/commentators suggest reading יום as ים in verse 8. (Cf. Marvin Pope, *Job*. 3rd ed. [AB; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973], 30; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 86–87; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 108–9).

⁷⁶ *Job* 3.2—וּקְלַל אֶת יוֹמוֹ. *Job* 3.8—יִקְבְּהוּ אֲרָרֵי-יוֹם (cf. Clines, *Job 1–20*, 68, 86–7).

⁷⁷ Habel, *The Book of Job*, 104.

⁷⁸ Norman Whybray, *Job*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 63.

⁷⁹ Jer. 20:14–18 utilizes similar language to *Job* 3:1–9. However, Habel says, "Unlike Jeremiah, who links his curses with historical precedents, Job operates with a cosmogonic prototype." (Habel, *The Book of Job*, 103).

Thus, chapter 3 delivers two different implications at the same time. Job posits that he is in a place from which there is no way out. On the one hand, he is trapped inside a box with nowhere else to go, on the other both *Job* and Job convey Job's wisdom in his language. In a space-less place where he has lost his way (דרכו), Job tries to construct a new way (דרך) by finding his words (דבריו). In the following speeches (chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10), Job clearly shows how he builds his new way in the new chronotope.

Job's Language in an Estranged Space in Chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10

Chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10 vary slightly from chapter 3. While chapter 3 emerges as a response to Job's present suffering and pain and does not clearly reveal Job's addressees, chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10 are responses to his friends' speeches (chapters 4, 5 and 8). They clearly identify Job's addressees as Job's friends and God. In response to his friends' speeches, Job creates his speeches to build his way in the chronotope. After delving into the spatial and temporal words Job uses in the chapters, this section examines how Job finds his way by creating language to describe his relationship to his body, his friends and God in the chronotope.

Spatial Language in These Chapters

In chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10, several categories of spatial language are used. The first category consists of words indicating parts of Job's physical body: my mouth (9:20), flesh (6:12), my body, my skin (7:5), my eye (7:7). In these chapters, words highlighting Job's body or parts of his body constitute the main category of spatial language used. The second category includes spatial words indicating Job's friends metaphorically as streams and wasteland (6:15, 18). The third category comprises words related to his relationship with God: under guard (7:12). As in chapter 3, the grave (7:9; 10:19) and womb (10:19) are also used.

Temporal Language in These Chapters

In terms of temporal language, the chapters include such words as my days (7:5; 9:25), months (7:3) and night (7:3, 4). These words clarify how Job understands his relationship to his body, his friends and God. The following section of the book analyzes how Job discusses his relationship to his body, his friends and God in the chronotope.

Chronotope in Chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10

While Job recollects his day in chapter 3, he focuses on his present day in chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10. Clearly, the word, “now” (עתה), signals the turning of Job’s time from his past day to his present day. Job’s understanding of his present day could be understood using the Bakhtinian concept of ‘small time.’⁸⁰ ‘Small time’ refers to the present time, the immediate past and the foreseeable future.⁸¹ ‘Small time’ focuses on a character’s particular time, for Bakhtin recognizes the importance of an individual’s separateness, that is his or her specific place in time, space and culture.⁸² It is precisely Job’s specific place that makes Job’s time visible.

According to Job’s understanding of his body, Job clearly perceives his time as the end of time.⁸³ His time is not open

but is the time of “forced labor” (שכיר), which does not end in the shaping *telos* of narrative emplotment and resolution but simply when the time is up.⁸⁴

So, although his friends, particularly Eliphaz, console Job saying there will be a better future for him, Job never agrees with them, because according to his experience, his time has already come to an end. Therefore, the word, “now” (עתה), indicates that Job’s time is up.

How does Job specifically elucidate his day now? Job describes his days as the days of a hired hand or laborer in 7:1; swifter than a weaver’s shuttle in 7:6; a breath in 7:16; faster than a runner in 9:25; and few in days in 10:20. Job wants his hearers to understand his perception of his days through these words. Actually, Job tries to deliver two implications concerning his days. The first one is that his days are like the days of a forced laborer. As forced laborers work without wages and hope, his days offer no purpose or hope to Job. The second implication is that his days pass too quickly to enjoy them. Now, we need to delve further into Job’s use of the language in which he chooses to express his relationship to time and space.

⁸⁰ The concept of ‘small time’ is the reverse of Bakhtin’s concept of ‘great time’. The concept of ‘great time’ will be discussed in chapter 5.

⁸¹ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 1–9; 169–70.

⁸² Morson and Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 230.

⁸³ Newsom indicates that Job’s different understanding of time from his friends’ emerges from his different understanding of the relationship of his body to time. (Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 134)

⁸⁴ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 133. The emphasis is original.

Job's Speeches in the Chronotope

In order to understand Job's use of language in the estranged chronotope, we need to divide Job's speeches in chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10 into three categories: the relationship of Job's language to his body, to God, and to his three friends. By delving into Job's utterances in relationship to his body, God and his three friends, readers may read how Job reveals his own understanding of himself as a pious and wise man and his understanding of his three friends' understanding of Job as a pious man by interacting dialogically with his three friends' voices.

Job's Language and His Body

Job's body plays a unique role for Job in understanding himself and his relationship to others. First, Job's body influences Job in shaping his identity because his body becomes the centre for him to understand his world. The formation of his world is contingent upon the activity of his physical body but the activity of Job's physical body is expressed in a very limited way in *Job*. Second, his body influences Job's idea of his relationship to his friends and God because his body determines the power of the other's gaze and becomes the means for distinguishing between his own understanding of himself and others' understandings.⁸⁵

In chapter 6, Job begins his speech about his body in the chronotope as a response to Eliphaz's speech concerning his impatience.⁸⁶ Job's explanation for speaking in such a rash manner in chapter 3 is due to his physical condition. According to 6:2–7, Job chose to say what he did in chapter 3 because his vexation and calamity are too unbearable for him to speak patiently. The cause of his intolerable condition is his physical body which is in severe pain because the arrows of the almighty, their poison and the terrors of God are in him (6:2–4). Furthermore, Job's severe physical pain is described metaphorically in verses 5 and 6.

⁸⁵ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, xxxiii–xxxviii.

⁸⁶ Clines illuminates that Job speaks to no one and ignores the friends entirely and speaks of God in the third person in 6:2–13. In 6:14–30, Job addresses his friends and Job speaks to God in 7:1–21 (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 167). However, language is an intersubjective entity. Even 6:2–13 emerges as a result of an intersubjective relationship between Eliphaz and Job. If there were no speeches by Eliphaz', it is possible that Job would not have spoken in such a manner: there may have been no speech at all or perhaps a different speech. In other words, Eliphaz' speech influences Job to form his speech in 6:2–13 as a response to Eliphaz and his friends.

Verses 5 and 6 in particular highlight Job's intention to communicate what kind of pain he is undergoing and to provoke his friends into becoming active participants in understanding his suffering by breaking the Gricean maxim of quantity. Verses 5 and 6 take a question form, but the questions in the two verses do not expect answers from his friends because both Job and his friends already know the answers to the questions. By using questions to which both parties know the answers, Job breaks the maxim of quantity, which is "make your contribution as informative as is required."⁸⁷ By breaking the maxim, Job intends his friends to understand that he is going through the suffering undeservedly⁸⁸ and to acknowledge that their understanding of his suffering is wrong. According to Job's reasoning, he responds that he is not able to be patient. At the same time, Eliphaz's urgings that Job needs to be patient and wait until God restores him, because God will surely restore him since Job is righteous (4:6, 7; 5:17–27), are wrong.

Consequently, this section of the book examines how Job defends these reasons by answering the following questions: Why does Job link his impatience to his body? How does Job describe the function of his body in terms of his impatience? What is Job implying by dint of language about his body?

First, why does Job use the language of his body to explain the reason for his inability to be patient? In 4:3–6, Eliphaz suggests that Job should remember what he did for those who had undergone a similar situation to Job's. With his words Job encouraged, strengthened and supported those who were stumbling and had weak hands and feeble knees. In this speech, Eliphaz may have been trying to provide a way of transcending Job's miserable situation by referring to the body's regenerative capacity. Eliphaz tries to place Job in a space where he can be regenerated from his suffering by assisting him to recognize stories in which he played a particular role.⁸⁹ In other words, since Eliphaz' expectation is for Job to play a role in fulfilling his task as a hearer/reader, Eliphaz brings up a story referring to knowledge stored in Job's memory, so that Job might easily make a decision among many possible meanings of Eliphaz' speech and might grasp Eliphaz' intention to release Job from his suffering.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ See 40n.

⁸⁸ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 171–72.

⁸⁹ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 101.

⁹⁰ "... the task of reader is always one of choice and distinction amongst possibilities of meaning, of the activation and assessment of the possibilities of the text." (Pyper, *David As Reader*, 41)

However, Job as a reader/hearer rejects the way suggested by Eliphaz because Eliphaz' speech is nonsense to Job in the new chronotope. Job makes clear that his space cannot be identified with that of his beneficiaries. Job's beneficiaries were in a space where they could be rejuvenated by a source from the outside, which was Job, but Job has no sources on the inside or outside of his space to revivify him. By depicting his physical condition, he makes it clear to his friends that he has lost all sources of support (תשיה: 6:13). Job clearly expounds that the central discrepancy between Eliphaz' speech and Job's response in 6:2–13 is a different understanding of the relationship of his body to space.

Second, this difference can be seen plainly when we answer the second question 'How does Job describe the function of his body in terms of his impatience?' In several verses, Job describes his body as having been invaded and wounded (6:4; 7:5, 14; cf. 7:20).⁹¹ In particular, Job looks at his body as having been invaded and wounded *by God*. God sees, seizes and attacks him (Job 7:12–16, 20; 17:20; 10:4–9, 14–17). This perception of the relationship of his body to God introduces a major crisis to his self-identity, for the invaded, wounded and broken body represents Job's invaded, wounded, and broken identity.⁹²

Job perceives the suffering in his body as an agent that makes his body his enemy. Job becomes his own enemy because of the suffering in his body and his body as it suffers. The suffering in Job's body negates his relationship to his body because the suffering makes him betray himself and turn his body into a weapon against himself, ultimately turning him into his own enemy.⁹³ When Job begins to suffer physically, his body starts to be in pain. His body in pain becomes a means to deliver pain to Job. For instance, "if a thorn cuts through the skin of the woman's finger, she feels

⁹¹ Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 134) points out that Job's body is described using the imagery of invasion: "A significant number of Job's representations of the body are invasive images: the poisoned arrow that penetrates the body (6:4; cf. 7:20), worms that cloak and feed on broken and oozing skin (7:5), dreams invade the interiority of psychic space (7:14), images that culminate in the graphic description of penetration and disemboweling in 16:12–14."

⁹² Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 135) explains the relationship of the body with self-identity as the following in her book: "The consequence of the violation of the time and space of subjectivity is the disintegration of the self, again graphically expressed in terms of the body: 'my throat would choose strangling [and I would choose] death rather than my bones' (7:15). Not by coincidence the terms for 'throat' (*nepes*) and 'bones' (*esem*) are terms in Hebrew that become idiomatic expressions for the self, equivalent to the personal pronoun 'I.' The body—bone and breath—is the space of the self."

⁹³ Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 48.

not the thorn but her body hurting her.”⁹⁴ Thus, when Job says in 6:4 that God’s arrows are in him and his spirit drinks their poison and the terrors of God are arrayed against him, Job feels his body hurting him as well as God’s hand smiting⁹⁵ him.

In 7:1–5, Job explains clearly how his body hurts him. He admits that because his body is in pain he cannot sleep and so he waits for the morning but the morning still does not bring him rest. Furthermore, he describes his body clothed in worms and dust (לְבַשׁ בְּשָׂרִי רִמָּה וְגִישׁ (וְגוֹשׁ) עֹפֶר עוֹרִי). Consequently, Job states that he chooses death over his body or bone in 7:15 (וּתְבַחֵר מִחֵנֶק נַפְשִׁי מוֹת מֵעֲצָמוֹתַי) and rejects⁹⁶ his life and wishes to die in 7:16 (מֵאַסְתִּי לֹא-לְעֹלָם אֲחִיָּה חֵדֵּל מִמֶּנִּי כִּי-הִבֵּל יָמִי). In this way, the body in pain no longer shows favor to Job but instead it functions like an enemy who inflicts suffering and pain on Job. Therefore, in an estranged space, his body becomes estranged from him, since his body is acting as an agent independent of Job’s ability to stand against himself.⁹⁷ Due to his relationship to his body, he desires death again.

Third, what does Job imply through language that speaks of the body in pain and death? In his speech, Job conveys the meaning that his body is being used against him.⁹⁸ To resolve the enmity between him and his body, Job delivers his wish to God for God to crush him (6.8–9). Further, in rejecting his life and expecting that he would lie in dust soon (7.16, 21b) Job struggles to escape the space where his body has become an adversary to him. Why would God’s crushing him resolve Job’s problem in the space? How does death play out to restore order to his estranged space?

The natural order of life begins with birth and ends with death. Both birth and death originate from God. As Job confesses in 1:21, human beings come from a mother’s womb and eventually return there. The order has

⁹⁴ Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 166.

⁹⁵ In 2:5, *hassatan* suggests God smite Job’s bone and flesh, but the one who actually touches Job is *hassatan* rather than God, according to 2:7. However, in the new chronotope from chapter 3 on, Job perceives his suffering as being caused by God’s hand smiting him.

⁹⁶ The Hebrew verb requires an object but the object of the verb is not clearly expressed in 7:16. However, according to the previous verb where Job already made a choice for death rather than his body, we can conjecture that the object of the verb may be Job’s life (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 191).

⁹⁷ In the Hebrew Bible, certain parts of the body are sometimes understood as an agent that is independent of the self. (David Clines, “The Disjoined Body: The Body and the Self in Hebrew Rhetoric,” in *Biblical Interpretation*, ed. G.A. van der Heever and S.W. van Heerden [Pretoria: University of South Africa, 2001], 148–51)

⁹⁸ 2:5 clearly mentions that *hassatan* suggests God use Job’s bone and flesh as a *means* to see whether or not Job would curse God.

been established by God because God has given and God has taken. For Job, the order from birth to death is a logical, spatial and temporal order. Since the order is authorized by God/God's words,⁹⁹ it would be righteous and wise for Job to keep the order rather than break it. Therefore, in the prologue, when Job's wife suggests that Job needs to *ברך* God and die, Job responds saying it would be a foolish thing to intervene and break the order established by God. However, the order has already been broken in the new chronotope. Since God does not take his life from him even though he has given him life, Job perceives that he cannot die, even though he wants to.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, there is no order in the new chronotope. However, Job tries to reorganize his space by creating a language with an order from birth to death and asks God to crush him and reject his life. This is the only way for Job to follow to ensure that he is consoled and joyful because it shows Job's keeping of God's words (6:10). By keeping God's words, Job may be trying to maintain himself as a wise and pious man in his estranged chronotope.

Job's Language and His Relationship with God

Second, Job's perception of the relationship of his body in pain to his space is well illustrated by understanding Job's perception of his relationship with God. Both *Job's* readers and Job's friends may grasp the reason behind Job's perception of his paralysis in this space if they understand his understanding of God. Job understands the suffering in his body as a medium to position God as his enemy. Specifically, Job confesses that the suffering caused by his body is the result of God's targeting his body for attack. In response to Eliphaz' first speech in chapters 4–5 and as a way to justify his rash speech in chapter 3, Job proclaims what God has done to him/his body by saying, “for the arrows of the Almighty are in me, my spirit drinks their poison; the terrors of God are arrayed against me,” (6:4). Following God's attacks, his body can no longer enjoy rest (7:4) and is full

⁹⁹ In Gen. 3:19, the idea that man will return to the place from which he has been taken is proclaimed in God's words: “And to the man he said (אמר) . . . By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return (עד שובך) to the ground, for out of it you were taken (לקחת); you are dust, and to dust you shall return (תשוב).”

¹⁰⁰ Although Job does not know the discussion in the heavenly council, he believes that God has hedged in him so that he may not die. Job's readers actually agree with Job's perception for they know the information that God has not allowed *hassatan* to touch Job's life (שמר נפשו) in 2:6.

of worms and dirt and his skin hardens and breaks out (7:5). Actually Job's confession in 6:4 reflects his perception of his present suffering. In other words, there is no other possible explanation for his suffering than that God is the aggressor.¹⁰¹

Why does Job view his suffering as attacks from God? There are two reasons. The first is that Job is bereft of language to substantiate his suffering and pain, since "physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it."¹⁰² Job has lost all language except the language of suffering. This language is used to explain the suffering, not to Job himself because Job is the one actually undergoing the suffering, but to his friends. They are expected to speak on behalf of Job and his suffering as a way to eliminate Job's pain or, at least, to appeal on behalf of Job to the one who is causing the suffering.¹⁰³ In presenting God as the assailant, Job wants his friends to recognize the intensity and seriousness of his suffering. By positioning his body as God's target and God's arrows as the weapon, Job can effectively display the attributes of his suffering, for "the image of the weapon only enables us to see *the attributes* of pain" and "it is clear that the attributes we are seeing are the attributes of *pain*."¹⁰⁴ Thus when Job tells his friends that God's arrows are in him in 6:4, he intends his friends to perceive the gravity of the suffering he is experiencing in his body, described in 7:4–5, as indicating that he is being tested by God.

The second reason is Job's perception of God as choosing to torture Job. Job elucidates this idea of God in 9:1–24 as a response to Bildad's first speech in chapter 8. According to the pericope, Job introduces God as one who possesses wisdom in his heart and might and strength. Due to His wisdom and might, nobody can resist and argue against him and succeed. His wisdom and might reveal him as one who is invincible, inexplicable and one who surpasses all human knowledge. This understanding of God's nature is reflected in Job's perception of God as the one who does not heed his voice and is apathetic to his innocence. As for Job, God is indifferent to his innocence and only interested in unearthing his sins and punishing him (9:15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 28, 30–31).

Then why does Job perceive God as his torturer? We can also extract the reason for this from Job's perception of the suffering in his body. Job knows that he is innocent. Although he is blameless, he is oppressed by

¹⁰¹ Cf. Spieckermann, "Die Satanisierung Gottes," 436, 439.

¹⁰² Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 4.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰⁴ Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 17. The emphasis is original.

suffering and pain. The suffering and pain in his body start to sever his language. Just as the pain destroys Job's world by destroying his language and turning Job into an enemy against himself, Job feels that the pain in his body is coercing him to confess to his sinfulness rather than his innocence *contra* his own will—he is blameless, upright, fearful of God and one who turns away from evil. By breaking language, the pain in his body is indifferent to Job's innocence. The pain shatters Job's world.¹⁰⁵ This function of the pain/suffering is shared with that of a torturer. A torturer wants to hear the tortured person's voice express the torturer's point of view rather than their own point of view.¹⁰⁶ The torturer totally destroys the tortured person's voice, world and self and only leaves the body and its pain to the one who is being tortured. On the other hand, the torture itself erases the body and pain for the torturer, leaving the voice, world and self to the torturer.¹⁰⁷ The torturer wants to hear what he or she wants to hear from the person he or she is torturing by means of the pain.¹⁰⁸

Such is the way Job understands the relationship between God and himself. God is a torturer who tortures Job to make him say that he is a sinner. Readers can summarize how Job perceives God in three ways. First, Job undoubtedly believes that his suffering comes from God, as when God fights against his enemy. The concept of war is well reflected in 6:4 and 10:17. As aforementioned, Job associates his suffering with God's arrows in¹⁰⁹ him (חַמָּתָם שְׁתֵּה) (חֲצִי שְׂדֵי עֲמֹדִי), the poison of the arrows in his spirit (רוּחִי בַּעֲוֹתַי אֵלֹהִי יַעֲרֹכֻנִי) and the terrors of God arrayed against¹¹⁰ him (תַּחֲדָשׁ עֵדִיד נִגְדִי וְתָרַב כַּעֲשָׁךְ עֲמֹדִי) in 6:4. Moreover, in 10:17 Job introduces the image of an army¹¹¹ at war to clarify God's act of tormenting him:

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰⁶ Magdalene, "Job's Wife as Hero," 226–27, quoting from Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 45–51.

¹⁰⁷ Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 46.

¹⁰⁸ Magdalene, "Job's Wife as Hero," 225.

¹⁰⁹ The preposition עֲמֹדִי here can be translated in several ways such as 'within', 'toward' or 'against' me. However, I choose 'in me' or 'within me' as the meaning of the preposition, since Job's spirit already drinks the poison according to the next colon and עֲמֹדִי is parallel to בִּי and עֲמֹדִי in Job 28:14 (cf. Clines, *Job* 1–20, 158; Pope, *Job*, 50). The LXX also supports the translation 'in' me by mentioning "for the arrow of the Lord is in my body": βέλη γὰρ κυρίου ἐν τῷ σώματι μου ἔστιν.

¹¹⁰ Clines (*Job* 1–20, 155, 158) and Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 70) support the MT instead of any suggested emendation for the word and translate 'set out' or 'arrayed against me'. cf. Judg. 20:22; 2 Sam. 10:9f; Job 33:5.

¹¹¹ I am inclined to Pope's translation (*Job*, 81) of the words חַלִּיפּוֹת וְצָבָא as a hendiadys to mean 'army,' 'warfare' or 'military service,' since the meaning of army for the words fits the context of Job's perception of God's as a torturer.

חליפות וצבא עמי. In these verses, Job likens his suffering to the pain and torture that an army at war or hostages must endure. Second, as suffering in war is given by God without a valid reason (חנם: 9:17) and people are tortured regardless of their righteousness or sinfulness, Job knows that there is no reason that he should be suffering. Third, Job confesses that even though he is innocent, his mouth¹¹² condemns him and even though he is blameless, God¹¹³ proves him perverse (אם-אצדק פי ירשיעני תם-אני: 9:20). In other words, in Job's perception, the only explanation for God's infliction of torture without due cause is to compel him to admit that he is a sinner even though he is innocent *contra* his intentions. Therefore, Job perceives his suffering as torture from God, whose ultimate objective is to force Job to confess his sins. Actually, God's action as a torturer forcing Job to confess himself as a sinner is effectively portrayed in 9:31 and 10:4–6. Verses 9:31 and 10:6 clearly indicate God seeking out Job's sin (אז בשחת תטבלני ותעבוני שלמותי: 9:31) and requiring Job's iniquity and sin (כי תבקש לעוני ולחטאתי תדרוש: 10:6). Consequently, Job perceives God as his torturer, which leads him to regard God as his enemy.

In order to reorganize his broken space, which results from a broken, hostile relationship with God, Job must first violate the traditional language used of God. The traditional ancient Israelite concept of God views him as one who is compassionate and wanting to deliver. In several lament psalms, this concept serves as the presupposition for prayers supplicating God to have compassion and save the speaker.¹¹⁴ This concept also holds a significant position in Job's friends' speeches (5:8–16; 8:5–7, 20–22; 11:13–20), but Job destroys the concept and reorganizes the aspects of the language of lament Psalms.¹¹⁵ In 7:17–21 and 10:1–22, Job defines God as one with no compassion at all, who represses Job until his iniquities are

¹¹² For the sake of parallelism, Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 199) reads פי (my mouth) as פיו (his [God] mouth). Clines (*Job* 1–20, 214, 218), Pope (*Job*, 72–73), Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 96) and Habel (*The Book of Job*, 179) read פי my mouth as it is in the MT. I also read it as Job's mouth, because, according to Job's perception of God, God as the torturer tortures Job to confess his sins or to make his mouth condemn himself.

¹¹³ The subject of the verb ויעקשני is ambiguous: God's or Job's mouth. Clines (*Job* 1–20, 214, 218) and Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 96) favors Job's mouth as the subject of the verb. On the other hand, Pope (*Job*, p. 69), Habel (*The Book of Job*, 179) and Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 196) favor God as the subject of the verb. However, it does not matter much whether or not the subject of the verb is God's or Job's mouth, because, according to Job's understanding, God is the One who either proves Job's sinfulness or causes Job's mouth to reprove or condemn him as a sinner.

¹¹⁴ Pss. 19, 78, 103, 130, etc.

¹¹⁵ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 138.

out in the open, is apathetic to the difference between the righteous and the wicked and who judges the righteous as sinners.

Second, Job creates a new language for himself, which has a legal connotation. By using legal language in 9:17, 20 and 10:2, Job places God in a court room so that he can appeal for vindication. By building up the legal language, Job restores his way by finding a way he can get vindication from God. So why does Job create such a language in order to achieve vindication from God? An answer is provided in examining Job's relationship with his friends in the space.

Job's Language and His Relationship to His Friends

The explanation for the creation of the new language is Job's perception of his friends as enemies. Just as the body in pain makes Job and God into enemies, the body in pain also destroys the relationship between Job and his friends and his friends become his enemies. First, Job clearly reflects his understanding of his friends as enemies by describing what they are like in 6:14–27. The pericope successfully presents Job's friends as enemies who are indubitably created as such by Job's particular perception/world-view concerning his friends and their speeches in this context.¹¹⁶ In the pericope, as a response to Eliphaz' speech in chapters 4 and 5, Job declares that his friends¹¹⁷ have given up being true and faithful friends by losing their loyalty (דֹּשֵׁן) (6:14–15).¹¹⁸

As discussed above, by cursing his birthday in chapter 3, Job wants his friends to grasp his intention to convey the intensity and gravity of his suffering. From chapter 3 on, Job expects that his friends will invent¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ According to Bakhtin, a speaker's artistic representation of another's speech is influenced by the speaker's own context. Therefore, every word used in a speaker's speech "is a point of view, a socio-ideological conceptual system of real social groups and their embodied representatives." (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 333, 411)

¹¹⁷ Although Job makes this response after hearing Eliphaz' speech, he seems to respond to all three friends because he uses the masculine plural noun and pronoun to refer to his friends and three masculine plural verbs referring to his friends' actions in verses 15–29.

¹¹⁸ In 16:2, Job defines his friends as makers of more trouble rather than good comforters. (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 369, 378)

¹¹⁹ Actually, Job's three friends cannot invent a new language with which to comfort Job, since the three friends can only creatively reveal what was already present in the words in the prologue when they speak to Job in the estranged chronotope, according to Bakhtin (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Creative Work* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1929), 71–72; quoted in Ruth Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 91). In the estranged chronotope, as for Job's three friends, what is already present in Job is Job's sinful nature. Thus, his three friends have to

a new language on his behalf in order to share the reality of the pain in his body and his body in pain¹²⁰ and, at the same time, Job waits for his friends to comfort him using this new language. However, Job's friends fail to meet Job's expectation. Job's friends renounce their loyalty and friendship by failing in what they are supposed to do as friends.

What Job expects from his friends is not a gift or a bribe or even deliverance from an opponent's hand but simply a language to speak on his behalf (6:22–23). However, instead of inventing a new language to comfort Job, they reprove him and accuse him of being a sinner (6:25–26). In 6:15, Job compares these characteristics and behaviors of his friends to that of a torrent-bed and freshets that pass away. They are supposed to provide water but fail to carry out their task. By this comparison, Job emphasizes his friends' behaviors as a threat to his life which he likens to those who would even cast lots over an orphan and bargain for their friend (6:27). Such thinking is justified because any symbolic thinking used for a specific group of people cannot be merely symbolic but has implications for the behavior of the specific group of people.¹²¹

For Job, such attributes and acts bring shame upon those whom he has trusted (**בְּשׁוֹ כִּי בִטַח בְּאוֹ עֵדֵיהֶם וַיִּחְפְּרוּ**: 6:20). For Job, who trusts his friends and has certain expectations of them, his friends bring shame to him, because they fall short of Job's trust and expectations by failing in what they are supposed to do.

Why do Job's friends fail to grasp Job's implication? To answer this question, we need to examine the relationship between the voices of Job and his friends, who are Job's hearers. As discussed previously, Grice's four maxims presuppose the condition that the speaker and hearer operate within a shared cognitive convention and conjecture that Job and

rebuke Job to make him repent. We will examine the three friends' creative act of discovering meanings instead of inventing language in chapter 4 *The Voices of Three Friends*.

¹²⁰ Scarry brings the relationship between physical pain and language to the courtroom: "... physical pain begins to enter language is the court-room, for sometimes when a person has been very seriously injured, a civil suit follows; and the concept of compensation extends not only to the visible bodily injury but to the invisible experience of physical suffering. ... Under the pressure of this requirement, the lawyer, too, becomes an inventor of language, one who speaks *on behalf of* another person (the plaintiff) and attempts to communicate the reality of that person's physical pain to people who are not themselves in pain (the jurors)." (Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 10)

¹²¹ Mandolfo, *Daughter Zion Talks Back to the Prophets*, 44: She quotes from Mary Shields, "Circumcision of the Prostitute: Gender, Sexuality, and the Call to Repentance in Jeremiah 3:1–4:4," *Biblical Interpretation* 3(1): 72 and Carol Newsom, "Women and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom," in *Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies: Identity and the Book*, ed. Timothy K. Beal and David M. Gunn (London: Routledge, 1997), 155.

his friends must share a common social-cultural linguistic convention in order to communicate effectively with each other. So, *Job* corroborates that Job and his friends do share a common social-cultural convention for communicating with each other, which is “a belief in a retributively ordered world governed by an unfailingly just God.”¹²² However, the magnitude of Job’s catastrophic suffering replaces Job’s worldview with a world of chaos.¹²³

His friends fail to create language for Job in the chronotope. Specifically, Job’s friends fail to reconnect with Job’s language, which has been broken by his suffering. Without the connection between Job’s language and that of his friends, his friends turn Job’s speech into isolated, senseless moans,¹²⁴ making it powerless to deliver his implication. Job perceives his friends’ failure to connect with his language as their failure to understand his speech about his innocence, since Job asks them to hear his speech as friends and understand it (Job 6:28–30).¹²⁵

In terms of performative language, the reason behind Job’s friends’ failure to discern Job’s implication can be explained by the failure of Job’s friends to be certain of the perlocutionary aim of Job’s speech because of their socio-linguistic conventional appraisal of the illocutionary force of his speech.¹²⁶ Job’s speech undoubtedly has a perlocutionary effect on his friends, but it should have no intended illocutionary force for Job.¹²⁷

Why do Job’s friends fail to discern the perlocutionary aim of Job’s speech? Why does Job’s speech fail to convey its illocutionary force to his friends? In 6:21, Job perceives that his friends’ speeches are influenced by their understandings of his calamity or misfortune. They become frightened and distance themselves from Job and act like enemies (כִּי-עֵתָהּ) (הֵייתֶם לֹא תִרְאוּ חֵתֶת וּתִירָאוּ). In 2:12, Job’s friends come to Job to console him and when they see him in the distance (מֵרְחוֹק)¹²⁸ and acknowledge that Job’s misfortune was so horrendous even to the extent that they do not recognize him, they tear their clothes and cry and become silent for the seven nights and days. So, 2:12 evinces that Job’s friends kept a

¹²² Valerie Forstman Pettys, “Let there be Darkness: Continuity and Discontinuity in the ‘Curse’ of Job 3,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 98 (2002): 91.

¹²³ Pettys, “Let there be Darkness,” 91–92.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹²⁵ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 182–83.

¹²⁶ Pypers, *David As Reader*, 80.

¹²⁷ Cf. Schiffrin, *Narrative as Self-Portrait*, 189.

¹²⁸ The Hebrew word can have a double-meaning or voices. It can mean both a physical distance and distance in a relationship.

distance (רחוק) from Job when they saw his misfortune with their own eyes (עיניהם).

This misfortune perceived with eyes from a distance could refer to Job's physical misfortune. As a result of Job's physical misfortune, Job's friends set themselves apart from him and relinquish their loyal and faithful friendship so as not to incur God's wrath¹²⁹ and not be made impure (Lev. 5:3; 21:11). Job perceives his friends' words and attitude as a loss of the faithfulness that they are supposed to have as friends.¹³⁰ As a result, Job recreates the relationship with his friends from loyal friendship into hostile animosity because of his body in pain and his concept of himself in the body in pain. At the same time, Job's friends reform their relationship with Job as a consequence of their understanding of Job's body in pain.

Second, Job treats his friends as enemies because of the breakdown in language. The disparity in their language severs their relationship. In chapter 9, readers can recognize that the relationship between Job and his friends has been broken because of Job's language, which is notably different from his friends'. In chapter 9, Job clearly displays a language that seems to carry on the same meaning as that of his friends in chapters 4 (Eliphaz' speech) and 8 (Bildad's speech); however, it delivers a completely different implication. Bakhtin further elaborates this phenomenon in his concept of *hybrid construction* or *pseudo-objective motivation*.¹³¹ Pseudo-objective motivation is

an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two "languages," two semantic and axiological belief systems.¹³²

Although the common view seems to be given by either the polyphonic author or the narrator, it is a view more commonly shared by the general public and there will be tension between the general 'belief' as stated and the narrator's or author's actual opinion of the matter at hand.¹³³

How can it be possible that one speech can include two different voices, utterances or styles? According to Bakhtin, the dialogic nature of

¹²⁹ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 180.

¹³⁰ Hesed is used here to indicate the faithfulness or friendship that Job's friends are supposed to show. Since there is no hesed, they fail as friends. (Clines, *Job 1–20*, 176–79; Andersen, *Job*, 130; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 148–49; Whybray, *Job*, 52)

¹³¹ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 301–422.

¹³² Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 304.

¹³³ Ibid.

utterance or speech, hybrid construction or pseudo-objective motivation can make that possible. An utterance or speech is comprised of one voice with other voices. Therefore, one's speech includes another's speech in one's own language as well as one's own speech.

Before applying Bakhtin's pseudo-objective motivation to chapter 9, this book needs to alter the theory to go beyond the original concept of Bakhtinian pseudo-objective motivation. Bakhtin's pseudo-objective motivation looks at the voice of the author of the text and that of the speaker in the text. Therefore, pseudo-objective motivation erases the boundary between the authorial speech of the text and the speech of others in the text, so that both speeches exist in one form. However, when this book deals with the speeches of Job and his friends, the book applies Bakhtin's pseudo-objective motivation by replacing the voice of the author of the text and that of the speaker in the text with the voice of Job and that of his friends. Therefore, the characteristics of an authorial voice are not restricted to a narrator's or an author's but may be found in a character's voice in terms of one character authoring other characters.

For instance, in the case of Job, an authorial voice can be seen in his friends' voices when they try to rewrite Job in their own terms. According to pseudo-objective motivation, Job as author also takes on his friends' speeches in his own speech and artistically represents their speeches, in which they tried to author or write Job. The motivation to transmit his friends' voices by artistically representing them in his speech is pseudo-objective because of his confession in 9:2a (יִדְעֵתִי כִּי בִּן). In 9:2a, Job regards his friends' speeches as authorial¹³⁴ and as speeches that operate with the same common or objective view or faith in God that he has. Job imbues his direct speech with the authorial voices in his speech in 9:2–4.

According to this altered Bakhtinian pseudo-objective motivation, Job exhibits a double-accented, double styled hybrid construction. From the point of view of its grammatical and compositional markers, Job's speech appears to belong to a single voice but in actuality, it contains two different belief systems on a semantic level and an axiological level.¹³⁵ On the semantic level, Job seems to choose to follow his friends' belief, but on the axiological or ethical level, Job displays a belief that is vastly different from that of his friends.

¹³⁴ In this section, 'authorial' is used in the sense of one character's rewriting another's character.

¹³⁵ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 304.

9:2–4 evinces this tendency or linguistic phenomenon. In 9:2–4, Job says,

Indeed I know that this is so; but how can a mortal be just before God? If one wished to contend with him, one could not answer him once in a thousand. He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength—who has resisted him and succeeded?

When readers encounter this pericope, they can concur that this is Job's response to the speeches of Eliphaz and Bildad in chapters 4 and 8 because of the first three words in verse 2: **אֲמַנִם יִדְעֵתִי כִּי-כֵן**. The God whom Job knows is semantically reflected as the same God known to his friends in 9:2–4.

9:2b (**הָאֲנוּשׁ מֵאֲלוֹהַּ**) can be paralleled with 4:17a (**וּמֵהָ-יִצְדָק אָנוּשׁ עִם-אֵל**) and 8:3b (**וְאִם-שְׂדֵי יַעֲוֶה-צַדִּיק**). These three clauses clearly depict God's justice. No human being can say that he or she is just before God, because He alone is just. 9:3 is in agreement with 4:2 and 8:2. Second, in 9:3, Job confesses that no one can argue with God or answer God. Similarly, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar start their speeches by rebuking Job because Job's speeches are not acceptable before God. In the three speeches, a human being's words cannot be brought before God. Third, Job, Eliphaz, and Bildad concur that God is wise, mighty, and performs wondrous works in 5:9; 8:3, 5 and 9:4, 10. In 9:4 and 10, Job specifically declares that God is wise and mighty and performs great things beyond understanding, and marvelous things without number (**עֲשֵׂה גְדֻלוֹת** and **חֲכָם לֵב וְאִמִּיץ כַּח**: 9:4 and **עַד-אֵין חֶקֶר וְנִפְלְאוֹת עַד-אֵין מִסְפָּר**: 9:10). In 5:9, Eliphaz praises God for making great things beyond understanding, and marvelous things without number (**עֲשֵׂה גְדֻלוֹת וְאֵין חֶקֶר נִפְלְאוֹת עַד-אֵין מִסְפָּר**). Moreover, in 8:3 and 5, Bildad exhorts God's might (**שְׂדֵי**). In these comparisons, readers can acknowledge that Job's speech in 9:10 and Eliphaz' speech in 5:9 are identical. Thus, Job's language seems to be identical to the language of Eliphaz and Bildad on a grammatical and syntactical level. In other words, on a grammatical level, Job's language carries a doxological tone. However, on an axiological and ethical level, Job takes a different approach from his friends.

In order to recognize the different voices in Job's speech, readers need to see what Job's friends are conveying in their doxology. According to the speeches of Eliphaz and Bildad because God is just and almighty, He will restore the righteous and punish the wicked (4:7–9, 11–16, 18–27; 8:3–6). Since no one is righteous before God, human beings should willingly accept suffering from God (4:17). However, God will listen to the prayers

of the righteous and the weak because God lifts up the low and makes the righteous prosperous (4:11–16, 18; 8:5–7). In the eyes of his friends, the only way to end the suffering is for Job to pray to God (4:8; 8:5). In this way, Job's friends convey their belief in the retributive order of the world.

On the other hand, Job's doxology delivers different implications than that of his friends. While his friends' belief is that God will listen to Job's voice and repentance and restore his fortune to him because of God's justice, wisdom and might, Job's belief is that God will not listen to his voice and will continue to treat him like a sinner without reason. Furthermore, he cannot possibly argue with him precisely because of his justice, wisdom, and might.

Clines notes Eliphaz' speech concerning the impossibility of anyone being perfectly righteous and Job's speech concerning the impossibility of anyone gaining vindication from God.¹³⁶ However, Job's implication in his doxological tone exceeds Clines' interpretation. Responding to the pain in his body, Job reflects God as actively attacking him rather than as a protective God. According to Job's perception, because God is wise and mighty and no one can argue with him, God can pour out his anger upon Job without any due cause and Job cannot question God because God will ignore his voice (9:11–16). Further, because God is just, His action can be justified even though He is punishing Job without reason (9:17–19).¹³⁷ When God destroys, He does not differentiate between the blameless and the wicked (9:22). To Job, God is a merciless enemy who destroys the innocent.

This portrayal of God as one who destroys what He has made is clearly visible in chapter 10. In this chapter, Job portrays God's craftsmanship. God's creation of human beings is likened to making pots (verse 9), making cheese (verse 10) and weaving garments (verse 11). However, the creations are smashed by their creator, just as a pot is crushed and returned to dust (verses 8–9). The destructive impulse is generated by the presence of a flaw.¹³⁸ When craftsmen find flaws in what they have made, they destroy their creations relentlessly. So, when God finds flaws such as iniquities and sins in human beings God is enraged and destroys the sinner. Therefore, in chapter 10, Job implies that his suffering is due to

¹³⁶ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 227.

¹³⁷ In 9:17–19, Job's perception of God seems to echo God's speech to *hassatan* in the prologue. In 2:3, God admits that He tries to destroy Job without reason. We will examine how the voices echo in detail in chapter 5 of the book.

¹³⁸ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 147.

God's anger against him because he has been found to be like a vessel with flaws before God. Job sees that God considers him as his enemy. Due to the fact that God is looking for his iniquities (10:6), Job loses the intimate relationship with God and the creator-creature relationship. In other words, his identity, which was formed in his relationship with God, has been shattered. So, Job artistically represents his friends' voices in his speech in the body-in-pain context to deliver an implication that is vastly different from his friends' originally intended message. This different use of language sets Job apart from his friends.

Job clearly distinguishes his language from that of his friends by recontextualizing his friends as those who exacerbate his situation. In 6:14–19, Job likens his friends to a place that kills and offers no life or hope. However, readers need to be careful when reading Job in his hopeless place, because Job's perception of the hopeless place may be vastly different from the traditional understanding of the place. In a general sense, and specifically in the Hebrew Bible, a hopeless place is understood as a place where death is imminent and death itself exists, but Job actually hopes for death and to Job, a hopeless place is something other than death. The next section further examines the hopeless place within Job's context.

The Hopeless Place

In chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10, his broken body and broken relationship in pain provides the context for Job to perceive that he is in a hopeless place. Particularly in 7:6 and 9:25, Job confesses that his days end without hope (ימי קלו מני-ארג ויכלו באפס תקוה) and his days are fleeting and pass by faster than a runner, so he can see no good (וימי קלו מני-רץ ברחו לא-ראו). Notably in these chapters, Job clearly visualizes a hopeless life in his place. Job confirms in 7:7 that his life is empty by saying that his eyes do not see any good or future any more (לא-תשוב עיני לראות טוב) and also, by comparing his fleeting days to a ship in a reed and an eagle swooping on prey (חלפו עם-אניות אבה כנשר יטוש עלי-אכל). In 9:26 Job describes how fast his time is passing and there is nothing left to expect. Thus, Job expresses his feeling that there is nothing for him in the future.

According to his speech, for Job, this hopeless place is a place where he goes round and round without purpose or reason. (7:1–6; 9:25) Even death would be good for Job because at least death would bring an end to his suffering. However, there is not even death in this place. There is only suffering going round and round aimlessly.

Why does Job perceive his life with such hopelessness? The first reason is that there is no physical strength left in him. Job's broken body shows him as one who has completely lost the strength to wait for the future and the endurance to have hope (מה-כחי כי-איחל ומה-קצי כי-אאריך נפשי אם-) (כח אבנים כחי אם-בשרי נחוש 6:11–12). Not only has he lost his physical strength, but he has lost his help or sound wisdom to uphold and sustain him until hope arrives (האם אין עזרתי בי ותשיה נדחה ממני) (6:13). Further, there is more. The pain in his body not only makes Job lose all strength, help and sound wisdom to continue to have hope, the pain in fact causes Job to desire death and loathe life: Job asks God to kill him (מי-יתן תבוא) (6:8–9) and chooses death (ותבחר מחנק נפשי מות מעצמותי) (7:15).

As discussed above, the second reason is that Job's relationship with himself, God and his friends is hostile and antagonistic. The outcome of such a broken relationship is Job's broken identity and world and his broken identity and world are formless (תהו) and empty (בהו); somewhere where there is no life and hope for Job, as he proclaims in chapter 3.

This latter reason leads into the third reason, which is Job's understanding of his space as a hopeless place and the broken language between himself and God and his friends. As aforesaid, a broken body produces a broken language, which in turn severs the relationship between the broken person and his or her links in his or her society. In Gen. 11:1–2, YHWH ceases the building of the tower of Babel by shattering the language of the workers into multiple confusing tongues (כי-שם בלל יהוה שפת כל-הארץ) (ומשם הפיצם יהוה על-פני כל-הארץ 11:9). Just as YHWH makes people's work futile or hopeless by shattering their language, God in *Job* makes Job's life cease, makes it futile and hopeless also by destroying his language. As for Job, he perceives his place as a very hopeless place from which there is no escape.

Conclusion

After the seven days and nights of silence, Job opens his mouth to respond to what he heard from his messengers and to what he heard, or did not hear, from his friends in chapters 1 and 2. In his responses, Job clearly expresses that from chapter 3 onward he is in a new chronotope. Job acknowledges that what he had seen as his way forward has now been blocked. However, Job does not abandon his ability to answer in the new chronotope. He responds to his new chronotope by attempting to create a

new way for himself. First, in chapter 3, although his language has been broken because of the suffering, he remolds and reshapes language in order to reorder his shattered way. Specifically, by cursing the time and places from his origin to the present, he shows his intention to reorder his broken order. In chapter 3, his use of temporal and spatial language stands in opposition to traditional conceptions. By deviating from the traditional use of language, Job reconstructs his identity as one who has himself to establish the regularity of his time and space or cosmic order, given the collapse of the divinely established order of the first two chapters.

Second, in chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10, Job expounds on his relationship to his body, God, and his friends. Just as he redefines the concept of the womb and death in a manner divergent from the traditional one, Job reconfigures his relationship with his body, God and his friends. By reconfiguring these relationships, Job identifies himself again and shows his intention to see himself in his new way, which differs from the way hidden by God.

By trying to recreate his cosmic order by creatively creating language/ words and trying to redefine the relationship with his own body, God and his three friends, Job clearly identifies that he is a man who has a keen understanding of his situation and his relationship with others and the wisdom to know how to rebuild his space. This is Job's perception of himself as a man and his responses to his new/estranged chronotope. However, yet again Job's voice fails to finalize Job himself. Instead, his voice provokes his three friends' voices to emerge to interact dialogically with, and respond to, Job's voice to attempt to finalize Job differently from the way Job has attempted to finalize himself. Eventually, Job's voice in chapters 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10 in *Job* opens space and time for his three friends' voices to respond to his voice. In the next chapter, we examine how his three friends respond to Job's responses by delving into how they receive the new/estranged chronotope and how their reception varies from that of Job.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VOICES OF THE THREE FRIENDS

Readers may come to understand how Job reads/hears the three friends' voices in chapters 4, 5, 8 and 11 from reading Job's response in 12:2: "Doubtless you are the people, and wisdom will die with you" (אִמָּנֶם כִּי אַתֶּם-עִם) (ועִמָּכֶם תָּמוּת חִכְמָה). Job's voice responding to his three friends in 12:2 provides readers with a hint as to what Job's three friends' voices were about. *Job* 12:2 shows that Job perceives his three friends' voices in chapters 4, 5, 8 and 11 as a statement that wisdom and knowledge belong to no one but Job's three friends.

Interestingly, *Job* 12:2 also reflects how Job perceives his three friends' reception of his voice in chapters 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10. Job believes that his three friends receive his voice in those chapters as the proclamation of his own wisdom and knowledge concerning himself, his world and God and his attempt to recreate the regular order of the world and clearly discerning the broken relationship between him and his body, him and God and him and his friends. Job also observes that, in their responses to his voice, the three friends attempt to invalidate Job's wisdom and knowledge and identify Job as a man who needs to re-learn and re-gain wisdom and knowledge from them.

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to find an answer to why Job reads his three friends' voices in such a way by examining how each friend's voice responds to Job's voices. Each responds in its own unique and different way to define Job as a man who is in need of wisdom and knowledge and shows how each friend considers himself wiser than Job. Specifically, this chapter investigates the voices of Job's three friends under the following headings-Job's identity, Job's fate, Job's words, Job's piety and Job's knowledge-to show how the three friends' voices creatively discover different meanings from Job's self-understanding as a man who possesses wisdom and knowledge. Eventually, having done this, the chapter concludes that the three friends' voices echo the voices in the prologue, particularly the voice of *hassatan*, and reflect their unique ideological perception concerning Job's voice defining Job as a pious and wise man in the estranged chronotope.

Eliphaz' Voice

Eliphaz is the first of Job's friends to initiate words in response to Job. This section examines Eliphaz' voice by categorizing chapters 4 and 5, which are Eliphaz' utterance, into two parts: Job's identity and Job's fate.

Eliphaz and Job's Identity

What is Eliphaz' first impression of Job's utterance in chapter 3?¹ How does Eliphaz' voice in chapter 4 and 5 assist readers to read Eliphaz' reading of Job's voice in chapter 3? Eliphaz' perception of Job's identity can be clarified by hearing/reading Eliphaz' voice, since Eliphaz' voice reveals his own conception of Job's identity.² In chapters 4 and 5, Eliphaz understands Job as a righteous sufferer or righteous sinner. Eliphaz does not deny Job's righteousness (4:3–6).

However, due to his own ideological conception of man, Eliphaz informs Job that Job's suffering is a natural phenomenon because Job is a man. According to Eliphaz, no human being is perfectly pious and righteous, because humans are so susceptible to failing in upholding righteousness and piety. Even if someone is righteous and pious, he or she deserves suffering due to his or her vulnerability to failure (Job 4:17–21).³

At the same time, since Eliphaz holds a belief that suffering will not lead a righteous man to total destruction as his final destination, but a righteous man will eventually recover and be restored and, since he believes Job to be righteous, he encourages Job by saying that he would soon be restored and recover (Job 5:17–26).

The précis of Eliphaz' ideological understanding of Job in chapters 4 and 5 is sufficient to provoke readers to ask the following questions: How

¹ Eliphaz' voice in chapters 4 and 5, which is in the first cycle, is different from his voice in the rest of chapters in the second and third cycles in *Job*, since Eliphaz' voice develops and discovers different meanings by dialogically interacting with his three friends'-Job's, Bildad's and Zophar's-voices. As I mentioned in chapter 1 of the book, the scope of the study is the prologue and the first cycle of the dialogue, so, the study of the development of Eliphaz' voice throughout the three cycles in *Job* is beyond the scope of this book.

² Eliphaz' words/language reveal Eliphaz' self for others (White, *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*, 13) and represent/s Eliphaz' ideological world (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 335).

³ David Clines, "The Arguments of Job's Three Friends," in *On the Way to the Post-modern: Old Testament Essays, 1967–1998* Vol. II, ed. David Clines, JSOTSup 293 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 727.

can Eliphaz understand Job as a righteous sufferer or sinner? How can Eliphaz conclude that Job's final destination is restoration? At first glance, Eliphaz seems to be creating such meanings for Job's identity and fate, but in actuality, Eliphaz has not invented what he says in the chapters but is only creatively reading new meaning out of what has already been there in the words in the previous chapters. Eliphaz' creative act for a meaning for Job's identity is not an inventive act but a revelatory one, as Bakhtin says:

... But to create does not mean to invent. Every creative act is bound by its own special law as well as by the laws of the material with which it works. Every creative act is determined by its object and by the structure of its object, and therefore permits no arbitrariness; in essence it invents nothing, but only reveals what is already present in the object itself. . . .⁴

How then exactly does Eliphaz perform his revelatory act concerning Job's identity and fate? Eliphaz begins his speech with a cautious and assuaging voice:⁵ "Are we to speak⁶ a word to you? You will be weary^{7,8} (הַנִּסָּה דְבַר) (אֵלֶיךָ תֵּלֵא). Eliphaz is wary about the words he would use for Job, since he is anxious about how Job would receive them (Job 4:2). Eliphaz' careful attitude sheds light on his perception of Job's utterance in the previous chapter. It is brought on by his perception of Job's utterance in chapter 3 as an act of self-destruction and of destruction of his world. Here are two explanations behind Eliphaz' perception of Job's self-destruction.

First, in chapter 3, Job seeks death. Eliphaz perceives Job's act of seeking death as Job giving up his one last remaining possession, which is

⁴ Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Creative Work*, 71–72; quoted in Ruth Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 91.

⁵ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 121; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 124.

⁶ The verb "הַנִּסָּה" can be understood as the verb "הַנִּשָּׂא," which means 'lift up', since the verb "הַנִּסָּה" is sometimes taken as an orthographic variant for the verb "הַנִּשָּׂא" in a first person plural imperfect form with interrogative הֲ and with 'נִסָּה' having been written for the verb 'נִשָּׂא', according to Clines (*Job 1–20*, 108). According to Clines, alternatively, the verb "הַנִּסָּה" could be parsed as third person singular piel form with הֲ to mean 'attempt' and 'venture'. However, the book prefers to take the verb "הַנִּסָּה" as an orthographic variant for the verb "הַנִּשָּׂא" in the first person plural imperfect form with interrogative הֲ, because in the context of Eliphaz' voice, Eliphaz is speaking as a representative for the other two friends, so, the first person plural form fits best for Eliphaz' voice here.

⁷ The verb תֵּלֵא means 'be weary or impatient' (BDB, 521). However, Clines (*Job 1–20*, 108) prefers the meaning of "be unable," viz., to bear something (Gordis; cf. JB). The book chooses to go with the meaning in BDB, because the meaning 'be weary' for the verb 'לֵא' clearly explains the reason why Eliphaz must be cautious about speaking a word to Job: Eliphaz may be cautious, because he does not want Job to be weary or shattered.

⁸ The translation is mine.

his *nefesh*.⁹ The abandonment of his *nefesh* means not only death but also forfeiting his throat or breath, which may imply the abandonment of voice and word. Job's forfeiture of voice and word prompts Eliphaz to assume that Job wants to annihilate words, because words were the means of delivering the news of the tragic events which brought suffering to Job in the prologue.¹⁰ This understanding of Job's attitude toward words causes Eliphaz to be very cautious about adding more words to Job's experience.

Second, in chapter 3 of *Job*, Job cursed the day of his birth, his mothers' womb, light, and darkness. For Eliphaz, Job's speech in chapter 3 reflects Job's attempt to transcend himself and be transformed into an autonomous being through his attempted destruction of the world and the chronotope in which he has been living in order to move creatively and actively out into a new world or new chronotope.¹¹ Job's attempt to become autonomous and achieve transcendence may make Eliphaz perceive Job's utterance in chapter 3 as Job's own effort to gain his autonomy and independence and as self-destruction and destruction of his world, since "to claim autonomy is both self-destructive and destructive of the world."¹²

From the readers' point of view, Eliphaz' possible conception of Job's self-destruction and destruction of his world may be explained by a Bakhtinian dialogic understanding of words and language. As we discussed, the estranged chronotope solely highlighted Job's voices and represented Job's image¹³ in his voice/language. Since Job's image is presented by his voice or language in the chronotope and "dialogism is inherent in language itself,"¹⁴ Job's image must be perceived as dialogic. Therefore, when Job attempted to transcend his world and become autonomous, Job denied his being as dialogic. Job's denial of his own dialogic being provides readers with the meaning behind Job's attempt to deny his word/language/voice. For readers, Job's attempt to deny his word/language/voice may imply Job's

⁹ According to Job 2:6, readers may assume that there was only one thing left to Job, which is his *nefesh*.

¹⁰ As mentioned before, the tragic events of the loss of his children and all his possessions were delivered to Job by messengers rather than Job eyewitnessing the events. Also, in the second test, the words of Job's wife might add to Job's suffering.

¹¹ Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 32.

¹² Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 32.

¹³ Bakhtin (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 85) contends, "The chronotope as a formally constitutive category determines to a significant degree the image of man in literature as well. The image of man is always intrinsically chronotopic."

¹⁴ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 45–46.

denial of his *nefesh* according to the reading of 2.6 and Job's denial of his *nefesh* could only mean his wish to destroy himself. Because of this understanding, readers may read that Eliphaz was taking extreme care not to provoke Job into performing more destructive acts against himself.

Rather than keeping silent, Eliphaz chooses to speak to Job. His understanding of Job's self-denial and destructive utterance provoke Eliphaz to realize Job's need for *others* in order for him to exist as Job. Eliphaz acknowledges that his words will prevent Job from a self-destructive consequence. What makes Eliphaz think that his words can help Job to exist as Job himself or prevent Job from a destructive end? The answer lies in the concept of a dialogic interrelationship/intersubjectivity between Job and Eliphaz. Eliphaz may perceive his responsibility as being the other who can provide a major element to assist Job in authoring or identifying himself in a unique time and space.¹⁵ Eliphaz exists in that particular time in which Job lost everything including his time and space and he came together with the other two friends to console Job, and he also exists in that specific place in which he sits with Job who has no way out of his own place (ממקמו).¹⁶ Due to this perception, after hearing Job's voice in chapter 3, Eliphaz may have recognized the important role of his voice/words for Job's situation and starts to speak. In this way, the chronotope of chapter 4 leads readers of *Job* to see that Eliphaz' voice has as much importance and significance as Job's voice in the chronotope in chapter 3.

To use a familiar Bakhtinian term, Eliphaz realizes his answerability in his unique time and space as another being. According to his answerability, Eliphaz performs the act of uttering/speaking by recognising his "non-alibi in being."¹⁷ If Eliphaz does not speak, there is no point in him being in the text. Specifically, in 4:2 "Are we to speak a word to you? You will be weary. But who is able to restrain from speeches/words/utterances?"¹⁸ (הנסה דבר אליך תלאה ועצר במלין מי יוכל), Eliphaz implies the importance of his words/voice, due to his awareness of Job's attempt to be a/an monologic/authorised being without an intersubjective relationship with others/his friends in Job's speech in chapter 3. By providing words to Job,

¹⁵ Green (*Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship*, 33) explains that a person's authoring of him- or herself starts from a particular place, literally unique in time and space, in which they start from a position of *outsidedness*. Cf. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 15–22.

¹⁶ Eliphaz' time and space depends on 2:11–13.

¹⁷ Bakhtin, *Towards a Philosophy of the Act*, 112.

¹⁸ The translation is mine.

Eliphaz attempts to make Job realize that he needs others to understand himself completely, since Job cannot name or understand himself.¹⁹ By making Job acknowledge the need to rely on others to understand his own being, Eliphaz expects Job to give up trying to transcend his limitations and so to be autonomous. In abandoning the pursuit of independence, Job would condemn his act of self-destruction and in turning to the inter-subjective relationship with others Eliphaz believes Job might restore his identity to that which he had before.

However, there still remain some unanswered questions: How can Eliphaz understand Job as a righteous and innocent person? How can Eliphaz know that Job as a man is susceptible to sin? How can Eliphaz be certain that Job will be restored in the future?

First of all, Eliphaz perceives that Job is righteous and innocent, because he has heard Job's voice and utterance in the previous chapter. In chapter 2:11–13, as we found in chapter 2 of the book, when the three friends saw Job from a distance, Eliphaz along with the other two friends perceived Job as a person who was already dead and not living.²⁰ However, Job opened his mouth and spoke in 3:1. That Job could open his mouth and speak could only mean that Job's *nefesh* was not yet dead.²¹ Particularly, in 3:11, 16, 20–21, Job sought death but he did not die. Job's voice in those verses delivered a clear message to Eliphaz that even though Job sought death, he could not find it. For Eliphaz, the fact that Job's *nefesh* was still alive and that Job could not find death induced Eliphaz to conclude that Job must be a righteous person, because a righteous person has a voice/*nefesh* to cry out about himself and his situation to God and to be heard and saved by God²² and at the same time, if Job was not a righteous person, he would have died, because death belongs to the godless²³ and only the innocent never perish but are restored (4:7–11; 5:2–3).

Also, Eliphaz' perception of Job's righteousness might be formed by his understanding of words in the dialogic nature of words and language. Readers may assume that Eliphaz treats Job as a righteous man on hearing/reading his utterances in 4:3, 4 and 6:

¹⁹ Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 32.

²⁰ Clines, *Job 1–20*, 61 and Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 39.

²¹ Chapter 2 of the book clearly explained that God and *hassatan* agreed to leave Job's *nefesh* in 2:6.

²² Pss. 5:3; 18:6; 27:7; 55:17; 64:1; 116:1; 119:149; 130:2.

²³ W.A.M. Beuken, "Job's Imprecation as the Cradle of a New Religious Discourse. The Perplexing Impact of the Semantic Correspondences between Job 3, Job 4–5 and Job 6–7," in *The Book of Job*, ed. W.A.M. Beuken (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1994), 64.

See, you have instructed (יִסְרַת)²⁴ many; you have strengthened the weak hands. Your words have supported those who were stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees. . . . Is not your fear of God your confidence (בַּסֵּלֶתֶךָ),²⁵ and the integrity of your ways your hope?

Verses 4:3 and 4 insinuate what Job did with his words. Job corrected, strengthened, supported, raised or made firm others who were in trouble. However, according to Eliphaz, when troubles came to Job, he did the opposite to himself (4:5). Instead of correcting, strengthening or supporting himself, Job attempted to destroy himself in chapter 3. Specifically, by using the word “knees” (בְּרִכִּים), Eliphaz describes what Job did in chapter 3 as the exact opposite of what Eliphaz says in chapter 4.

In 3:12 the word “knees” was talking about “the knees” which gave suffering to Job, but in 4:4 the word “knees” indicates the object of the encouraging nature of Job’s words. For Job, the “knees” in 3:12 could be the object of his cursing and the “knees” in 4:4 might be the object of his blessing. How might Eliphaz arrive at the meaning of a blessing for Job by hearing Job’s cursing of the “knees” in 3:12?

In 3:12, the “knees” goes with Job’s mother’s womb. Job’s utterance in 3:12 designates the “knees” as the means of helping Job’s mother’s womb to give birth to Job safely. For readers, the connection of the “knees” to “the womb” arouses the image of the “knees” as an object of Job’s cursing his mother’s womb in chapter 3 and also the image of the “knees” (בְּרִכִּים) as a means for Job’s “blessing” (מְבָרֵךְ) God in the prologue (1:21).

In the prologue (1:21), Job used the word “mother’s womb” as a way to display his innocence and righteousness and to convey the fact that he had not sinned or spoken wrongly to God and still בָּרַךְ God even after trouble came to him. The very mention of his mother’s womb proves that Job means to בָּרַךְ God. Job uttering the words “בָּרַךְ” and “the womb” together in 1:22 may have assisted Eliphaz in recreating the meaning of ‘blessing’

²⁴ Y. Hoffman (“The Use of Equivocal Words in the First Speech of Eliphaz (Job IV–V),” *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980): 114) suggests two possible meanings for the word: one is to strengthen and the other is to chastise. The two possible meanings provide Eliphaz’ two different implications: the former would be encouragement and the latter would be blaming Job for his hypocritical act. However, Clines (*Job 1–20*, 109) insists that the collocation with the other verbs of verses 3–4 removes the ambiguity of the word.

²⁵ The word has two possible meanings in the Hebrew Bible: 1) Confidence in Ps. 78:7; Job 8:14; 31:24; Prov. 3:26 and, 2) Stupidity in Ps. 85:9; cf. Ps. 49:14; Qoh. 7:25. Hoffman (“The Use of Equivocal Words in the First Speech of Eliphaz (Job IV–V),” 115) suggests the ambiguity of the word due to these two possible meanings. These different meanings also lead readers to see the ambiguity in Eliphaz’ meaning: either Eliphaz’ is chastising Job or he is encouraging Job. However, Clines (*Job 1–20*, 109) claims that there is hardly an ambiguity.

from the word “knees,” the word with which Job cursed in 3:12, since both the word “ברך” (bless) and “ברכים” (knees) share the same consonants (ב, ר, כ) and a womb and knees are a connected image.²⁶

Eliphaz’ creation of a new meaning for the word “knees” (ברכים) linked to Job’s mother’s womb in this particular place (3:12) may remind Job of his act of ברך God in 1:21 in the prologue. In reminding Job of this act, Eliphaz intends to make Job reflect on his innocence and integrity, since the word “knees” would then make Job recall what he had confessed in 1:22, that he had neither sinned nor ascribed anything bad to God, but ברך God with the words,

Naked came I out of my mother’s *womb*, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; *brk* the name of the Lord (1:21).

This is how the word “knees” has carried, from the very beginning, the meaning of Job’s identity as an innocent and righteous person. Readers may see that Eliphaz recreates the original meaning of the word “knees” from 1:21 to present Job as a righteous and innocent person upon hearing Job’s cursing of his mother’s womb and “knees” in 3:12.

Although Eliphaz seems to accept Job’s righteousness and innocence, he insists that Job must bear the suffering patiently, because human beings are neither completely righteous nor perfect (4:17–21) and are susceptible to sin. So, Job is neither completely righteous nor perfectly innocent and therefore is vulnerable to sin.

Eliphaz may have perceived Job’s susceptibility to sin and his hidden sins upon hearing Job’s own words (3:25) and the divine words (4:17–21). In 3:25, Eliphaz heard Job’s utterance when he said what Job received was what he feared or dreaded. Since what Job feared actually befell him, Job has neither peace nor rest but only troubles (3:26). However, in 4:6, from the readers’ point of view, Eliphaz creatively discovers a different word for “fear” (ירא) from the word for “fear” (פחד) used in Job’s utterance in 3:25. By transforming the word “fear” from פחד to ירא, Eliphaz’ act of reading the word “fear” (ירא) can be perceived as an attempt to provide Job with a chronotopic representation of memory²⁷ for the word “fear” (ירא) when it indicated Job’s piety in 1.1. The word “fear” (ירא) chronotopically represents Job’s former situation in which he feared God. The chronotopic

²⁶ The Hebrew Bible connects God’s *brk* and the birth of children (many sons or generations) in many places. (Gen. 1:22, 28.; 2:3; 9:1; 17:16, 20; 22:17; 1 Sam. 2:20)

²⁷ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 203.

representation of the word “fear” (יִרָא) insinuates to Job to return to his former fear (יִרָא) of God.²⁸

Eliphaz’ attempt to return Job to his former fear of God presupposes Job’s loss of his fear of God. According to Eliphaz’ perception, because Job has lost his former fear of God, Job has transformed the word fear “יִרָא” to fear “פָּחַד” in 3:25 and received what he feared (פָּחַד). Therefore, Job’s use of the word “פָּחַד” for the meaning of fear evinces that he possessed hidden sins and that he had already turned away from the fear (יִרָא) of God.

For readers, Eliphaz’ replacement of the word “fear” (יִרָא) for the word “fear” (פָּחַד) alludes to the narrator’s voice and Job’s voice in 1:1–5. In the very first verse of *Job*, the narrator represents Job as one who feared God and turned away from evil, but in 1:5, Job’s voice reveals his anxiety about his children’s alleged sins. A further examination of the narrator’s and Job’s voices in 1:1 and 1:5 leads readers to deduce two possible conclusions. One conclusion is that, as already discussed in chapter 2 of the book, if Job was righteous and feared God, he should have been content and enjoyed all that he had.²⁹ However, according to Job’s speech in 1:5, Job was anxious rather than content in all his days. Thus, the fact that Job is neither content nor enjoys his life in all his days (כָּל הַיָּמִים 1:5) implicitly raises the possibility that he could not be sure about the integrity of his sons and daughters and simultaneously, this lack of certainty concerning his children may have led him to be insecure about his integrity as a father and head of his house.

The other conclusion is that, if Job truly feared God and turned away from evil, he should not have been anxious. The fact that Job feared God and turned away from evil should only mean that he had a firm relationship with God and his integrity was confirmed by his fear of God. If Job had a firm relationship with God and his integrity confirmed, there would be no reason for Job to be anxious, since anxiety is “a sense of foreboding stemming from threatened vitality and anticipated breakdown of the integrity of the self”³⁰ and “is felt as a sense of ‘disintegration, and its subjective equivalent (‘falling apart’)”.³¹

²⁸ Beuken, “Job’s Imprecation,” 47.

²⁹ Deut. 8:10; Ps. 128:1–4.

³⁰ Robert Jay Lifton, *The Broken Connection: On Death and the Continuity of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), 128 is quoted by Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 93.

³¹ Lifton, *The Broken Connection*, 128 is quoted by Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 93.

However, Job is presented in 1:5 as one who is clearly anxious. Job's anxiety implies that he is implicitly guilty about separating from God and losing his firm relationship with God, since "guilt is a form of anxiety and results when one feels responsible for separation, stasis, and disintegration."³² Job's fear of losing his relationship with God and being separated from God is implicitly represented by his perception of his children's potential separation and disintegration from God because of their sins in his speech in 1:5, because Job may feel responsible for his children's sanctification and close relationship with God.

Moreover, it is unfeasible to turn away from evil without knowing good and evil. If Job had never known evil, he would not have taken the necessary action in 1:1 to turn away from evil because he would not recognize sin/evil.³³ That Job turned away from evil presupposes Job's knowledge about good/righteousness and sin/evil. Job's knowledge of good/righteousness and sin/evil may deliver readers the perception that Job realizes the plausibility of being separated and disintegrated from God because of his knowledge of good/righteousness and evil/sin.

It is most likely that readers would know that God cast out the first man and woman from the Garden of Eden because they became like God, *knowing good and evil*, according to Gen. 3:22–23. Therefore, just as the first man and woman were cast out of the Garden of Eden and lost their relationship with God because of their knowledge of good and evil, readers may read Job's anxiety as the signal that Job always realizes that he has the potential of being separated and disintegrated from God, which also means that he is always a *potential* sinner,³⁴ because of his knowledge of good and evil.

In addition, Eliphaz implicitly states that he has learned the fact that a man is vulnerable to sin and not completely righteous from a supernatural/divine revelation in 4:12–21. 4:12–21 records the account of Eliphaz nocturnal vision.³⁵ In the account, Eliphaz indicates that the word (דבר)

³² Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 93.

³³ Søren Kierkegaard (*The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*, ed. and trans., Reidar Thomte [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980], 42) states that innocence is ignorance.

³⁴ Cf. Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, 41–46.

³⁵ Scholars discuss the authenticity of the account of Eliphaz' vision and examine the interpretation of the account. Please refer to G. Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 141; Gary V. Smith, "Job IV 12–21: Is It Eliphaz's Vision?," *Vetus Testamentum* 40 (1990): 453–63; Fullerton, "Double Entendre in the First Speech of Eliphaz," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 49 (1930): 346–55; James Harding, "A Spirit of Deception in Job 4.15? Interpretive Indeterminacy and Eliphaz's Vision," *Biblical Interpretation* 13 (2005): 137–66.

came to him. However, Eliphaz does not clearly identify what sort of words they might have been or whose words.³⁶ Readers may assume that even Eliphaz may not have known whose words they might have been, since Eliphaz could not discern the appearance of the spirit who spoke to him in 4:16. As much as Eliphaz is without knowledge about the source of the words, readers are without clear knowledge about the nature and origin of the words. Both Eliphaz and readers³⁷ at least realize that Eliphaz heard the voice of a spirit (4:16) and received the spirit's words. At the same time, considering the continuation of Eliphaz words in chapter 5, readers conjecture that Eliphaz himself believed the words to be true.³⁸

However, because readers have the opportunity of hearing/reading the voices in the prologue, particularly the voices in the heavenly council, readers have an advantage over Eliphaz in constructing the meaning for the nature of the words. By bringing the voices in the heavenly council to the hearing of the voice of Eliphaz illuminating his nocturnal vision, readers may read that the most plausible candidate for the spirit in Eliphaz' nocturnal vision would be *hassatan*. Then, they may assume that the source of Eliphaz' knowledge about man is *hassatan*'s voice by identifying the spirit and its voice in Eliphaz' nocturnal vision as *hassatan* and *hassatan*'s voice in the prologue echoing in this passage.³⁹

First, according to the description of Eliphaz' experience of the arrival of the nocturnal vision in 4:14–15

dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my *bones* (עצמותי) shake. A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my *flesh* (בשרי) bristled,

readers recall *hassatan*'s suggestion to God in 2:5: "But stretch out your hand now and touch his *bone* (עצמו) and his *flesh* (בשרו), and he will curse you to your face." The allusion to *hassatan*'s voice in the prologue enables readers to envisage that *hassatan*'s voice might have come to Eliphaz, since when the night vision came to him, his *bone* was shaken

³⁶ Harding, "A Spirit of Deception," 141.

³⁷ Some readers may doubt whether or not Eliphaz' hearing of the words and the voice of a spirit really happened to Eliphaz in the text (cf. Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 141). However, this book receives what the text says to the modern readers: the text seems to describe that Eliphaz nocturnal vision really happened to him.

³⁸ 15:14–16 strengthens Eliphaz' tendency to believe what he heard in the night vision to be the truth. Eliphaz paraphrases the statement in 4:17–21 in 15:14–16.

³⁹ Luis Alonso Schokel ("Toward a Dramatic Reading of the Book of Job," *Semeia* 7 (1977): 52–53) states that Job's friends take, support and amplify the thesis and position of *hassatan*. Also, Timothy Jay Johnson (*Now My Eye Sees You: Unveiling and Apocalyptic Job* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 116) claims, "Eliphaz is unknowingly serving as one of the Satan's advocates..."

and the hair of his *flesh* bristled just as if *hassatan* had touched his bone and flesh.

Second, the word “רוח” also evokes *hassatan* and his voice in the prologue to readers. The meaning of the word “רוח” is ambiguous.⁴⁰ Some scholars prefer the meaning ‘a wind’⁴¹ and others prefer to translate it ‘a spirit’.⁴² However, in the process of reading the word “רוח” in Eliphaz’ voice, the word “רוח” together with its ambivalent meanings in fact allows readers to interact their reading of the word “רוח” in Eliphaz’s voice with their reading of the word “רוח” in the fourth messenger’s voice in the prologue to create the image of *hassatan* and his voice echoing in Eliphaz’ nocturnal vision in 4:12–21.

When readers read the word “רוח” in Eliphaz’ account of the nocturnal vision in 4:15, they may in effect recall another appearance of the word in Eliphaz’ mouth in 4:9. Undoubtedly, in 4:9 the word reminds readers of Job’s children’s death due to the great wind in 1:19, because the word “רוח” appears in Eliphaz’s voice in chapter 4 for the first time since it was used in 1:19 and 4:9 carrying over the image of “רוח” as the cause of death.

Since the previous scene was the heavenly scene, readers may perceive that the wind that caused Job’s children’s death might have resulted from the discussion between God and *hassatan*. In the heavenly scene (1:6–12), the prologue described *hassatan*’s suggestion to God that he touch all that Job has—readers may assume that “all” included his children—and God allowed him to touch all that Job had including his children except Job’s own self in 1:12. So, *hassatan* went out from the presence of the Lord. According to readers’ reading competency, readers may conjure up an image of *hassatan* going out from the Lord to *carry out* what he suggested to God and God allowing *hassatan* to do as he pleased.

Therefore, when they read the next scene, describing the tragic events that befell Job, readers may see clearly that *hassatan* would have been involved in all four tragic events, even though the text does not explicitly present all four tragic events as *hassatan*’s work. Readers’ certainty that the tragic events are *hassatan*’s work makes it possible for readers to read *hassatan*’s voice in the word “רוח” in the report of the fourth messenger.

Also, the word “רוח” functions to evoke *hassatan*’s voice to readers of *Job* enabling them to interact with their readings of an extra-Joban passage. 1 Kings 22:19–22 carries a very similar image as that in the heavenly

⁴⁰ Harding, “A Spirit of Deception in Job 4:15?,” 146–52.

⁴¹ Fullerton, *Double Entendre in the First Speech of Eliphaz*, 348; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111.

⁴² Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob* (Freiburg: Mohr, 1897), 28.

scenes (1:6–12; 2:1–7) in the prologue of *Job*. In both books, the Lord is represented as being surrounded by the host of heaven (1 Kings 22:19) and the sons of God (Job 1:6; 2:1). Both books identify the Lord as the one who initiates a dialogue with a question (1 Kings 22:20; Job 1:7; 2:2). In Kings the word הָרוּחַ is used to embody the character whose answers are directly quoted and who is involved explicitly in the dialogue with, and who makes suggestions to, the Lord and in Job this job falls to הַשָּׂטָן. The suggestion of הָרוּחַ causes the fall (וִיפֹל) of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead (1 Kings 22:20) and the suggestion of הַשָּׂטָן causes the fall (נִפְלָה) of the fire of God on Job's sheep and servants (Job 1:16), the fall (וִיפֹל) of the houses on Job's children (Job 1:19), and eventually the fall (וִיפֹל) of Job himself onto the ground (Job 1:20). Finally, both books use the verb "go out" (וַיֵּצֵא)⁴³ to indicate the movement of both הָרוּחַ (1 Kings 22:21) and הַשָּׂטָן (Job 1:12; 2:1, 7). These comparisons between 1 Kings 22:19–22 and Job 1:6–12 and 2:1–7 funnel readers' reading of the word "רוּחַ" in Job 4:15 to construct the image of *hassatan* in the prologue and particularly provoke readers to turn their attention to *hassatan's* voice echoing in Eliphaz' voice.

Third, clearly the divine words in the nocturnal vision reflect the implication of *hassatan's* rhetorical question and challenge to God in 1:10–11 and 2:4–5. Just as *hassatan's* question and challenge to God imply that if God withdrew His fence from around Job and permitted him to touch Job's bone and flesh, Job's integrity and righteousness would surely be crushed, the divine words in Eliphaz' utterance in 4:17–21 implicitly enunciate that mortals or human beings are neither righteous nor pure *before*⁴⁴ God and are vulnerable to fail in upholding their righteousness like houses built on clay and dust. For readers, God is in fact the One who boasted of Job's integrity and righteousness *before* him (1:8; 2:3) and *hassatan* is the

⁴³ Job 1:6 and 2:1 use the verb "יָצַב" in the hithpael form. However, in Job 1:6 the verb "יָצַב" in the hithpael form is difficult to interpret as being used to represent *hassatan's* movement, since it is very ambiguous whether or not *hassatan* has a clear intention to present himself to God in 1:6.

⁴⁴ There are ambiguous meanings for the preposition מִן in both מֵאֵלֶיךָ and מֵעֵשָׂה. Some translate the preposition מִן as a comparative ("Can mortals be more righteous than God . . .?"). Some translate it to mean "before" ("Can mortals be righteous before God . . .?"). Others take it as 'in relation to' or 'as against' ("Can mortals be righteous in relation to God . . .?"). However, this book takes its position based upon the relationship of the text to readers. Readers have already read God's boast about Job's righteousness and purity before His eyes, *hassatan* and probably before the sons of God. The words "before the Lord" (עַל יְהוָה) in Job 1:6 and 2:1 provide a clue to readers to read the preposition in 4:17 as 'in the presence of God' or 'before'. For various interpretations, please see Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 89; Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 378; Harding, "A Spirit of Deception in Job 4:15?," 152–53; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 112, 132.

one who predicted Job's loss of his righteousness and integrity *before* God (1:11; 2:5). Readers may observe the same implication in both *hassatan's* voice in Job 1:9–11; 2:4–5 and the divine words in 4:17–19. Therefore, even though Eliphaz is describing his nocturnal vision, readers can hear *hassatan's* voice in Eliphaz' voice.⁴⁵

Further, the way the heavenly scene in the prologue is read, may support the reading of the penetration of *hassatan's* voice into Eliphaz' voice through Eliphaz' nocturnal vision. The chronotope of the prologue introduced God/the Lord, the sons of God and *hassatan*. The chronotope presented the sons of God and *hassatan* as heavenly beings who moved and came to present themselves to the Lord and God as the One who did not move much. Other than the sons of God coming before God, the prologue did not describe their movement further. It presented *hassatan* as the only being who moved between heaven and earth as evidenced by *hassatan's* answer to God's question "Where have you come from?" "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it" (1:7; 2:2). Hence, this presentation in the prologue strongly suggests to readers that the most plausible candidate for the spirit in Eliphaz' nocturnal vision is *hassatan* and the voice of this spirit echoes *hassatan's* voice in the prologue.

Narrativity in Eliphaz' Voice

The final question, how Eliphaz can be certain of Job's restoration in the future, remains to be examined. 5:19–26 predicts that Job would eventually be restored from all his suffering to peace, harmony and abundance. Eliphaz can be certain of Job's restoration to peace, harmony and abundance because of his belief in the retributive order of the world, which might be reinforced by hearing Job's curse of his birthday and mother's womb in chapter 3.

Just as Job cursed in chapter 3, Eliphaz curses in 5:3. In 5:3, Eliphaz says to Job that when he has seen fools taking root, he curses their dwelling. Unlike Job's cursing his birthday and mother's womb in chapter 3, which is not possible since time cannot be reversed, Eliphaz may be implying that his cursing of fools is legitimate because his cursing belongs to the natural order of the world and is just. "Their [the fool's] children are far

⁴⁵ We will examine how *hassatan's* voice is echoed in Bildad's and Zophar's voices later on.

from safety, and they are crushed in the gate⁴⁶ and there is no one to deliver them" (ירחקו בניו מישע וידכאו בשער ואין מציל) (5:4).

Just as Eliphaz' cursing of fools is in the order of the world, so are Eliphaz' words about Job's restoration. According to 5:27, Eliphaz is sure that all that he has said in 5:18–26 is true. Therefore, Job must realize the truth. In 5:18–26, by recreating the narrativity in Job's life in the estranged chronotope, Eliphaz intends to make Job recognise that there is still hope and meaning left in his life.

How does Eliphaz think that Job can reconstruct the narrativity in his life? Newsom addresses the narrativity in Eliphaz' voice in her book.⁴⁷ She adopts the narrative views of three scholars: David Carr,⁴⁸ Mark Turner⁴⁹ and Paul Ricoeur.⁵⁰ According to Carr, people form a temporal horizon for their experience in an essentially narrative fashion.⁵¹ Experience is configured with an implicit beginning and an end and all human actions involve a beginning, middle and end.⁵²

This configuration exists in all stories. According to Turner, people's minds are capable of engaging in narrative imagining to project one story onto another and to organize and explore experience.⁵³ Through this combination of narrative imagining, what Turner calls "parable," "one realm of experience is projected onto another, reorganizing its salient features."⁵⁴

In the process of making human experience in a narrative structure accessible to consciousness, Ricoeur considers various new ways, which "permit a new relation to the events and conditions of life."⁵⁵ Ricoeur does this by defining one of the functions of a narrative. According to him, one of the main functions of a narrative is its ability to give knowledge and in order to give knowledge, a narrative should relate to experience.⁵⁶ "Representation," "imitation," or "mimesis" is required to make a narrative

⁴⁶ The word "שער" implies a forensic or legal sense (cf. Clines, *Job 1–20*, 115, 140; Habel, *Job*, 131; Pope, *Job*, 42).

⁴⁷ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 97–105.

⁴⁸ David Carr, *Time, Narrative, and History* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986).

⁴⁹ Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁵⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. K. McLaughlin and D. Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

⁵¹ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 98.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 99.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Newsom indirectly quotes this idea from Turner, *Literary Mind*, 134.

⁵⁵ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 100.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

relate to experience, because representation, imitation or mimesis has the power to afford knowledge about possible events that could happen in life.⁵⁷

From these scholars' narrative theories, Newsom infers the following:

This brief account of the relation between narrative, meaning, and human experience attempts to show how basic narrative is to existence itself. Though in some sense narrative is simply a given of experience, the more comprehensive narratives that provide human meaning are always vulnerable to dissolution and require considerable effort to recover, restore, or rewrite. Times of crisis, personal or collective, are often the occasions for the rejection of prior narratives and the embrace or construction of new ones. These issues, as well as other more specific aspects of narrative imagining and its limits, take on concreteness as one examines the dialogue between Job and his friends.⁵⁸

Based upon this conclusion, Newsom explains Eliphaz', as well as the other two friends', speeches as attempts to restore narrativity to Job's experience.⁵⁹ Eliphaz assists Job to see the narrativity in his life by beginning his speech with the story of what Job has done in the past to help his neighbours (Job 4:3–6).⁶⁰ By presenting the past to Job, Eliphaz wants him to reorganize the present as the middle of his life and to see the projection of the future yet to come/finish. By doing so, Eliphaz *re*-presents Job's present as a temporal event that would be transformed⁶¹ and implies that the new future would replace the chronotope the present has occupied.

Since Eliphaz has a perspective of narrativity with respect to Job's life, he can suggest to Job that he recreate his story into a better one. However, this leads to another underlying question. If Eliphaz is indeed looking at narrativity in Job's present experience, what is it that makes him perceive this narrativity in Job's experience?

When readers read/hear Eliphaz' voice by means of the dialogic relationship among voices,⁶² they may figure it out that Eliphaz is constructing his own ideological world.⁶³ As a response to Job's voice in chapter 3,

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 101.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 102–3) interprets Eliphaz' speech about God's great deeds as being a speech about the configuration of events or a trope of transformation.

⁶² Vice (*Introducing Bakhtin*, 56) states that the chronotope facilitates dialogism and polyphony by placing them in the same place.

⁶³ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 335.

in which Job attempted to construct his new ideological way, since Job could not see his way (דרכו נסתרה: 3:23), Eliphaz attempts to recreate narrativity to help Job find his way (דרכו).

How is it possible for readers to see Eliphaz, who is in the estranged chronotope, as someone who can create narrativity for Job? Eliphaz' otherness makes it possible for him to recreate narrativity within Job's estranged chronotope, because Eliphaz' otherness assists readers in reading Eliphaz' understanding of his chronotopic situatedness in the estranged chronotope relative to Job as a state of being 'in' but not 'of' the estranged chronotope. Readers may read that Eliphaz presupposes that, although he is 'in' the estranged chronotope, he believes that he can recreate narrativity for Job, since he thinks that he does not belong to the chronotope due to his otherness.

Eliphaz' otherness may be confirmed by his speech in 4:7. In 4:7, Eliphaz asks Job to "remember" (זכר) what happened to the righteous in the past. According to the verse, readers may assume that Eliphaz is playing his role by reminding Job of past events. By performing as an agent to provoke Job's past memory, Eliphaz appeals to Job to realize that he needs him because he can complete Job, since, according to Bakhtin,

It is possible to speak of a person's absolute aesthetic need for the other, for the seeing, remembering, gathering and uniting activity of the other, which alone may create his outwardly completed personality; this personality cannot exist unless the other creates it: aesthetic memory is productive, it gives birth for the first time to the external person on a new level of being.⁶⁴

As a result of Eliphaz' attempt to reform Job's memory, Eliphaz makes his speeches in 5:18–26. Eliphaz' speeches in 5:18–26 make it possible for readers to hear echoes of Job's voice in the prologue, since utterance or

discourse will be synchronically informed by the contemporary languages we live among, and diachronically informed by their historical roles and the future roles we anticipate for them.⁶⁵

By echoing Job's voice, 5:18–28 evinces that Eliphaz' voice embodies the act of the recreation of Job's voice in Eliphaz' mouth. By recreating Job's voice from the prologue in Eliphaz' voice in the estranged chronotope, Eliphaz implicitly reforms Job's narrativity in the estranged chronotope, since Job's voice from the prologue includes its narrativity.

⁶⁴ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 35–36.

⁶⁵ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 46.

In chapters 1 and 2, the chronotope of the prologue presented Job as being within a well-structured narrative. In the chronotope, Job himself revealed his idea of narrativity by confessing “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away” (1:21). According to Job’s voice in 1:21, God is the one who provides and also takes away just as God is the one who wounds and strikes and also binds up and heals (5:18). According to Job’s voice in 1:21, Job came from his mother’s womb, and he shall return there where he can have peace, no fear and harmony (3:14–19) just as according to Eliphaz’ utterance in 5:22–26, Job will have peace, no fear, and safety. Therefore, readers may realize Eliphaz’ voice as an effort to recreate, rather than invent, Job’s narrativity in the estranged chronotope.

Further, readers who know the theory of the carnivalesque might perceive Eliphaz’ discovery of Job’s potential restoration from Job’s curse in chapter 3. For Bakhtin,

carnival is the opposite of a time of terror or purges, as “the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and complete.”⁶⁶

According to the concept of the carnivalesque, Eliphaz may see the future from Job’s cursing of his birthday and his mother’s womb. Since “birth is always implicit within death,”⁶⁷ Job’s curse and seeking for death may represent a new birth. Ironically, Job’s curse in chapter 3 evokes Eliphaz to reveal Job’s future in his words. How can Eliphaz specifically read Job’s future in Job’s curse in chapter 3? In order to answer this question, in what follows we will examine Eliphaz’ creative discovery of Job’s future in Job’s curse.

Job’s Fate

From hearing Job’s curse in chapter 3, Eliphaz responds to Job by delivering a brighter future to Job. There is still hope for Job. While Job ended his speech in chapter 3 with the word “trouble” (רָגַז: 3:26), Eliphaz starts his encouraging words for Job with the words “six distresses/troubles” (בִּשְׁשׁ צָרוֹת: 5:19). Although Job saw no hope in his life, Eliphaz sees a hope for Job because of God’s deliverance. According to Eliphaz, if Job

⁶⁶ Vice (*Introducing Bakhtin*, 153) quotes from Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 10.

⁶⁷ Vice, *Introducing Bakhtin*, 153.

seeks God and presents his case to him, since God performs wondrous things, He will restore Job so that he has no fear of the wild animals of the earth and a peaceful relationship with the stones of the field and the wild animals. Also, Job's descendants will be many like the grass of the earth (5:8–26).

Eliphaz' argument can be clarified by readers' reading of Hos. 2:18–20. According to Hos. 2:18–20, the vision of having a peaceful relationship with wild animals results from a reconciliation between God and an unfaithful sinner.⁶⁸ As a sign of Job's reconciliation with God, Job will have a peaceful relationship with wild animals. Also, the image in Hos. 2:18–20 echoes an image in Isa. 11:6–9 of domestic animals forming a peaceful relationship with predatory animals and also of a nursing child playing with wild animals without getting hurt or destroyed. According to Isa. 11:1–5, when the fear of God and righteousness are restored, a peaceful situation/environment can be realized.⁶⁹

Particularly, the language used in Hos. 2 and Isa. 11 strongly delivers the image of the creation of the world in Gen. 1, which is “the pre-fall world” in the Garden of Eden, to readers.⁷⁰ In the creation story in Genesis, before the fall of the first man and woman, man had dominion or authority over all living creatures (Gen. 1:26–30; 2:19–20). The creation story allows readers to envisage a peaceful relationship between man and other living creatures. Also, Eliphaz' language for

Job's offsprings” (תְּצַמְצַם), a term used both for plants and human beings, will be “as the vegetation of the earth,” an expression echoing the creation story's account of an abundant plant life (Gen. 1.11–12, 29, 30).⁷¹

Therefore, Eliphaz' words for Job's future can be read as an attempt to restore the order of creation that Job tried to reverse in chapter 3. By cursing his birthday, light, day and his mother's womb, Job tried to reverse the order of creation in order to deconstruct the present time and space and to reconstruct his old time and space. However, Eliphaz tries to instruct Job that the restoration of his old time and space depends on his reconciliation with God, which will bring about the restoration of the order of creation, because the created order of the world is a retributive order.

⁶⁸ Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); C.L. Seow, “Poetic Closure in Job: The First Cycle,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34 (2010): 436–37.

⁶⁹ Cf. Seow, “Poetic Closure in Job,” 436–37.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 438.

In Eliphaz' instructive voice, it is plausible for readers to assume that Job may get the impression that Eliphaz is implying that reconciliation with God is a wiser and better way to reconstruct the order of the world than cursing the present time and space in order to reconstruct the created order of the world.

The view that the created order, which is a retributive order, can be restored by reconciliation with God, plays a significant role in the other friends' voices as well as in Eliphaz' voice. Particularly, readers can hear the same principle regarding a retributive order in the world in Bildad's voice. However, as I mentioned before, Bildad's voice can be heard in its unique and distinctive way even though he shares a similar worldview with Eliphaz. How is Bildad's voice distinctive? In the next section, we will delve into Bildad's unique voice.

Bildad's Voice

Bildad shares a similar view to Eliphaz' in terms of the retributive order of the world, but his voice is clearly distinctive from Eliphaz'. The main reason to regard Bildad's voice as distinctive from Eliphaz' voice is that Bildad is in a position to respond to Job's speech in chapter 3, Eliphaz' response to Job's speech in chapters 4 and 5 and Job's response to Eliphaz' reply to Job's speech in chapters 6 and 7 simultaneously, while Eliphaz was only in a position to respond to Job's speech in chapter 3. By dialogically interacting with all these voices in the previous chapters (chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), Bildad creates his speech which defines Job as an unrighteous man in chapter 8. Thus, Bildad has the advantage over Eliphaz that he gets to hear all three speeches before he speaks and builds his view of Job, which is unique and distinctive from that of Eliphaz.

Job's Words

Like Eliphaz, Bildad commences his speech by commenting on Job's speech in verse 1, but the attitude of Bildad's voice toward Job's speech is different from Eliphaz' attitude to Job's words. While Eliphaz is concerned about the influence of his words on Job, Bildad is rather concerned with the implications of Job's words on others, especially on God. Bildad is first to express a critical view of Job's words.

In chapters 6 and 7, Job complains that God has attacked (6:4) and persecuted him without reason (7:11–21). Bildad regards Job's complaint in

the chapters as intolerable because he seems to perceive that Job's words are a complaint not about God but *to* God directly.⁷² Since Bildad read and interpreted Eliphaz' speech in chapter 4, "Can mortal beings be righteous before God? Can human beings be pure before their Maker?" as suggesting that human beings are always accountable to God for He is always righteous, just and would do nothing wrong (8:3),⁷³ it is not possible for human beings to complain to God about His wrongdoing. Like Eliphaz, Bildad holds that only God can complain and bring charges against human beings, because God distrusts even His servants and charges His angels with error (4:18).

Also, Bildad may be criticizing in an effort to correct Job's words, because he may have perceived that Job misunderstood Eliphaz' words in chapter 5. In 5:8, Eliphaz suggested that Job should seek God and present his case⁷⁴ to God (אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֹדְרֵשׁ אֵל אֵל וְאֵל-אֱלֹהִים אֲשִׁים דְּבַרְתִּי). Pursuant to Eliphaz' suggestion, Job presents his case to God in 7:12–21, which entails God becoming his enemy and attacking and persecuting him in order for God to hear what He wants to hear rather than the truth.

Due to how Bildad read Eliphaz' suggestion in 5:8, Job's case in 7:12–21 was not what Bildad expected to hear from Job. Bildad presumes that Job must have misread Eliphaz' suggestion because he may also have read Eliphaz' speech as a suggestion that Job should ask for God's favor. Since God does great, unsearchable and marvellous things, the aim of asking God's favor would be restoration, for "He wounds but binds up and He strikes but heals, and eventually He will restore everything to Job and let him die in full age" (5:9–26). Bildad's postulation of Job's misreading of Eliphaz' speech in 5:9–26 leads him to repeat Eliphaz' words, replacing the phrase "set a case" (אֲשִׁים דְּבַרְתִּי) with the verb "seek favor" (תִּתְחַנֵּן) in 8:5. In so doing, Bildad intends to deliver clearly to Job the real implication of Eliphaz' suggestion in 5:8 and thereby proposes to Job that he correct his attitude toward God from that of complaining to humbly asking

⁷² The friends never speak directly to God. Unlike Job they always speak only *about* God.

⁷³ Clines, "The Arguments of Job's Three Friends," 731.

⁷⁴ The word 'דְּבַרְתִּי' is a rare noun. The word occurs three times in the phrase in Eccl. 3:18; 7:14; and 8:2 and in Ps. 110:4 (BDB, 184; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 116). BDB (184) translates the word as 'cause', 'reason' and 'manner,' but Clines (*Job 1–20*, 116)) states the meaning of the word to be 'utterance' or 'speech' rather than 'case', 'plea' or 'cause' in a legal sense. By supporting Clines' suggestion, this book translates the word as 'case' in the sense of Job's explaining himself in order to receive God's salvation as a righteous person rather than in a legal sense.

favor, since only God can restore Job to his rightful/righteous place (נות צדקד: 8:6).

Undoubtedly, Bildad's impression of Job after his speeches, especially in chapters 6 and 7, directs him to correct Job. Bildad's impression of Job's speeches is well presented in his words in verse 2. There Bildad compares Job's words to a great wind (רוח כביר). The meaning of the phrase "a great wind" is very ambiguous. The word "wind" may indicate either the characteristic of emptiness⁷⁵ or that of tempest and devastation.⁷⁶ However, in the context of the dialogue between Job, Eliphaz, and Bildad in *Job* 3–8, Bildad's use of the word "רוח" expresses how much Job's speech shocked him and even Bildad himself sensed the fear of a death-like force.⁷⁷

First of all, clearly Bildad designated Job's speech as a great wind after he heard Job's words in chapters 6 and 7. In chapters 6 and 7, Job utilized the word "רוח" to demonstrate his poisoned and deadly condition and situation. In 6:4, Job announced that the arrows of the Almighty are in him and his "רוח" drinks their poison. Job's use of the word "רוח" in 6:26 emphasises his despair. Time after time, Job presents the hopeless and distressful state of his "רוח" in 7:7 and 11.

After reading/hearing Job's use of the word "רוח" from his mouth, Bildad definitely observes the deadly force around Job. However, Bildad's use of the word "רוח" in his utterance in 8:2 delivers a different implication from that of Job's. Bildad may be recalling Eliphaz' use of the word "רוח," when he hears Job utter it. Eliphaz used the word in 4:9 and 15. 4:9 describes the "רוח" of God as the cause of the destruction of the wicked. In 4:15, a "רוח" appeared in Eliphaz' nocturnal vision and terrified Eliphaz and spoke in its voice⁷⁸ saying no human beings are righteous and pure before God. On hearing Eliphaz' words in these two verses, Bildad may perceive that "רוח" has the function of defining human beings as unrighteous and impure entities and of destroying the wicked. Therefore, unlike Job's use of the word to identify his enforced suffering without reason, Bildad may assume that the word "רוח" in Job's mouth in chapters 6 and 7

⁷⁵ Cf. *Job* 16:3.

⁷⁶ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 202; *Isa.* 17:12; 28:2.

⁷⁷ Clines (*Job* 1–20, 202) claims that the phrase "a great wind" represents Bildad's shock rather than mock because Bildad recognises Job's words as tempestuous and devastating.

⁷⁸ Interestingly enough, Eliphaz heard its voice alone, since he could not see or discern its appearance: "It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice" (יעמד ולא אכיר מראהו תמונה לנגד עיני) (*4:16* דממה וקול אשמע).

implies the meaning of the destruction of the wicked and at the same time evinces Job's suffering as evidence of Job's sinfulness.⁷⁹

Bildad's assumption of Job's sinfulness when he hears the word "רוח" in Job's mouth in chapters 6 and 7 allows him to imagine and fear the imminent judgment of God. The imagination and fear guide him to instruct Job that God is just and righteous in His correcting of Job and to suggest that Job seek the Almighty and ask His favor in order to be restored (8:3–6).

Further, Bildad's use of the phrase "a great wind" (רוח כביר) effectively authorizes Job to examine his sinfulness. If readers read the phrase "a great wind" in 8:2 chronotopically, they may be reminded of the space and time in 1:19 where and when Job's children were killed by "a great wind" (רוח גדולה). If, when readers hear "a great wind" in Bildad's voice they think back to the great wind that killed Job's children in 1:19, it is likely that the phrase would also cause Job to think back to his children's death.⁸⁰

Specifically, from a reader's point of view, the phrase "a great wind" in Bildad's critical words may provoke Job to form a cognitive process to connect his children's death by the power of "a great wind" to his anxious words concerning his children's sin in 1:5, which are eventually *creatively discovered*⁸¹ as "a great wind" by Bildad in 8:2. By connecting his children's death and his anxious words, according to readers' reading of Job, Job might assume that his words "*what if* my sons have sinned and *brk* God in their heart" in 1:5 have materialized. Even though Job rose early in the morning and offered burnt offerings to sanctify his children in 1:5, his words *alleging* his children might have sinned, turned out to be *true* words about his children and prove his children's sinfulness. In this way, Bildad's use of the phrase "a great wind" in 8:2 may help Job to examine his speeches in the previous chapters, which in turn may cause him to discover his own sinfulness.

By dint of the chronotopic reading of the phrase "a great wind," readers may read the following upon hearing/reading Bildad's words, which is that just as Job himself perceived Bildad's implication of Job's words

⁷⁹ The interpretation makes it possible for Bildad to doubt Job's piety and righteousness, which is explicitly expressed in the speech in verse 6. We will deal with Bildad's doubt about Job's piety and righteousness in detail under the section on Job's piety.

⁸⁰ Clines ("The Arguments of Job's Three Friends," 731), argues that Bildad brings up the fate of Job's children in 8:4 to warn Job.

⁸¹ Bildad's designation of Job's words as 'a great wind' in 8:2 is not Bildad's new invention but his creative revelation of what is already present in Job's words. Please refer to Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Creative Work*, 71–72; quoted in Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 90–91.

in chapters 6 and 7, Job comes to realize his own sinfulness through the phrase 'a great wind'. This perception leads readers to recognize that the effect of Bildad's words on Job is to encourage him to own his sinfulness.

Job's Piety

Clearly, Bildad's assumption of Job's sinfulness leads him to doubt Job's piety, unlike Eliphaz who was sure of Job's piety in chapters 4 and 5. Bildad's doubt over Job's piety and righteousness is evidenced in his utterance in 8:6: "If you are pure and upright,⁸² surely⁸³ then he will rouse himself⁸⁴ for you and restore⁸⁵ to you your rightful/righteous place/dwelling" (אם-זך וישר אתה כי-עתה יעיר עליך ושלם נות צדקך). From this verse readers may figure out that Bildad assumes Job is no longer pure and righteous, so Bildad in turn suggests to Job that he needs to reclaim his purity and righteousness. Only then will God restore him.

The previous verse (verse 5) in particular strengthens the argument for Bildad's assumption of Job's loss of purity and righteousness. In verse 5, Bildad advises Job to seek God and make supplication/seek favor to/from the Almighty. According to the verse, Bildad implies to his readers⁸⁶ that Job needs to return⁸⁷ to God and Job's returning to/seeking God can be

⁸² This clause is deleted by several commentaries 'as a moralizing gloss on verse 5' (Clines, *Job 1-20*, 198; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 183 and 184). Clines (*Job 1-20*, 198) states, "it is quite intelligible as a secondary condition." The book accepts the phrase as it is in the MT.

⁸³ BDB (472) explains that the preposition "כִּי" has an emphatic function: "there seem also to be other cases in which, standing alone, it has an intensive force, introducing a statement with emphasis yea, surely, certainly."

⁸⁴ Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 86) translates the verb "יעיר" as 'watch over', but this book translates the verb as 'rouse himself' or 'awake himself'. BDB (734-35) and Clines (*Job 1-20*, 198) supports the translation 'rouse' or 'awake' for the verb. Particularly, Clines (*Job 1-20*, 198 and 204) explains that the psalmic parallels of language make the meaning of the verb 'rouse' or 'awake' the most plausible rendering: Pss. 35:23; 44:24 [23]; 59:5 [4].

⁸⁵ The word "שָׁלַם" is possibly translated as 1) give peace, 2) recompense or reward, 3) restore or renew, 4) keep whole or safeguard (BDB, 1022-23; Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 89; Clines, *Job 1-20*, 198). However, the book chooses the meaning 'restore or renew' for the word "שָׁלַם" in the verse, because the meaning 'restore' or 'renew' fits Bildad's ideological understanding of Job's situation in the estranged chronotope. Bildad may perceive that Job has lost the righteousness and integrity that he had had before and Job needs to return to his previous righteous and perfect condition.

⁸⁶ This book considers Bildad's readers to be not only Job the character of *Job*, who is also a reader, but also historical, implied and modern readers.

⁸⁷ The verb "seek" (תִּשְׁחַר) may be used in the sense of 'repentance.' Cf. Clines, *Job 1-20*, 204; Hos. 5:15; Isa. 26:9.

considered as a condition for favor⁸⁸ from God. To Bildad, Job has lost the prerequisite conditions of purity and righteousness necessary to receive God's reward.

Then why does Bildad deal with Job as one who needs to return to God and to regain his righteousness and purity? Readers may find an answer by delving into the reason behind Bildad's designation of Job's words as "a great wind" in 8:2. Bildad's designation of Job's words as "a great wind" in 8:2 comes as a direct result of Job's speech in 7:11–12. 7:11–21 are Job's complaint to God and his justification for his complaint against God. Especially by questioning what God has done to him in 7:20–21, Job implies that God has done him wrong.

From the speech in 7:11–21, Bildad arrives at his own understanding of Job's attitude to God. Job still presents himself as righteous before God even after Eliphaz' nocturnal visionary revelation in 4:17. Job's attitude conveys to Bildad that Job dares to challenge God, since Job has ignored the revelation from the spirit in Eliphaz' voice and insisted that God is persecuting him without reason in 7:11–21. Bildad's perception of Job's challenge to God is expressed in his metaphorical description of Job's words in the phrase "a great wind." By reading Bildad's metaphorical description of Job's challenge to God in 8:2, readers may identify Bildad's interpretation of Job's speech in 7:11–21 with their conception of *hassatan's* speech to God in 1:9–10 and 2:4.

As abovementioned, the phrase "a great wind" in 8:2 represents Job's children's death. According to 1:19, the cause of Job's children's death was "a great wind" (רוח גדולה). However, readers recognise that the real cause of the children's death was *hassatan's* suggestion in the previous heavenly scene (1:6–12). Although the tragic events described in 1:13–22 do not explicitly reveal the involvement of *hassatan*, the chronotopic words in 1:12 and 2:1 in which *hassatan's* movement is implicitly presented illuminate *hassatan's* involvement.⁸⁹ Therefore, the great wind which caused Job's children's death could represent *hassatan's* involvement and fulfilment of his suggestion to God. *Hassatan's* involvement and suggestion in the heavenly scene illustrate *hassatan's* challenge to God. Subsequently, readers read *hassatan's* challenge to God from the phrase "a great wind" in 1:19.

⁸⁸ The verb "asking a favour" (תַּגַּן) is interpreted as a recompense or reward for right behaviour. (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 204)

⁸⁹ Please refer to chapter 2 for a detailed analysis about *hassatan's* chronotopic movement.

Bildad's phrase "a great wind" (רוח כביר) in 8:2 induces readers to read Job's challenge to God in the same way as *hassatan's*. Readers may conclude from Bildad's phrase that Bildad is attempting to *satanize* Job. However, interestingly, by satanizing Job, Bildad is reflected as *hassatan's* advocate.⁹⁰ In the prologue, God stated that *hassatan's* challenge incited (תסיתני) him to destroy Job without reason (2:3). *Hassatan's* act of incitement can be understood as an act of satanizing God.⁹¹ In the prologue, God's speech made it clear that the subject of the satanizing of God is indeed *hassatan*. Therefore, if the subject of satanizing Job in the dialogue section is Bildad, then Bildad partakes in *hassatan's* satanizing action and in so doing he identifies himself with *hassatan*. Ironically, for readers, Bildad displays his identity as *hassatan's* advocate.

Job's Fate

While Eliphaz encouraged Job to seek God and to preserve his close relationship with God by mentioning the fate of the righteous as the hope for Job's future (5:17–27), Bildad warns Job to seek God and ask his favor for restoration by enunciating the fate of the wicked in 8:11–19. Bildad's uncertainty over Job's piety leads him to warn Job as to the fate of the wicked rather than to encourage him with the fate of the righteous. Clearly, Bildad's understanding of Eliphaz' speech in chapters 4 and 5 and Job's speech in reply to Eliphaz' utterances in chapters 6 and 7 enable Bildad to discern that such a warning rather than encouragement could prove to be more effective in convincing Job to return to God.

First, in 4:6, Eliphaz tried to encourage Job, who cursed his birthday and sought death in chapter 3, by reminding him that Job's confidence was his fear of God and his integrity. However, Job still articulates his hopeless situation⁹² and charges God with wrongdoing in chapters 6 and 7. Job's utterance in chapters 6 and 7 leads Bildad to presume the loss of Job's confidence, since Job states that he no longer has any hope, fear of

⁹⁰ Johnson (*Now My Eye Sees You*, 119–23) proclaims that Job's three friends play their roles as advocates of *hassatan* in their dialogue with Job.

⁹¹ Please refer to chapter 2 for an interpretation of the verb. Cf. Spieckermann, "Die Stanisierung Gottes," 432.

⁹² Especially, Job ends his speech in chapters 6 and 7 with a self-denial/ending utterance. Job may want to close or end his *nefesh*/voice, but his friends prevent him from doing so. Cf. Seow ("Poetic Closure in Job," 436–37) applies the concept of poetic closure to the dialogue between Job and his friends.

God or integrity. To Bildad, Job's loss of confidence substantiates Job as godless, because the hope of the godless shall perish and their confidence is not strong like gossamer or a spider's house (8:13–14).

Second, Bildad applies Eliphaz' utterance concerning the fates of the wicked and their children in 4:8 and 5:4 to Job's situation, even though it is not clear that Eliphaz had Job and his children in his mind when he uttered the verses

As I have seen, those who plough iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.
By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are
consumed (4:8)

and "Their [the fools] children are far from safety, they are crushed in the gate, and there is no one to deliver them" (5:4). Regardless of Eliphaz' implication in the verse, Bildad read the verse as the fate of Job and his children. For Bildad, Job's children's death may be evidence of Job's sinfulness. Since Job's children perished as do those of the wicked, Job must be one of the wicked.

Third, Bildad uncovers more evidence to prove Job's sinfulness from Job's own mouth. Job complained against his friends saying "My companions are treacherous like a torrent-bed, like freshets. . . . In time of heat they disappear; when it is hot, they vanish from their place" in 6:15–17, because Job thought that his friends had abandoned their loyalty (חסד) to him (6:14).⁹³ However, Bildad finds a different implication in Job's utterance. As a response to Job's utterance in 6:15–17, Bildad expounds that Job's utterance functions to expose his identity with the wicked, because Job mentioned that those who disappear and vanish from their place in the time of heat were his companions who could be identified with him, and in 8:16–18, Bildad clearly articulates that those who disappear and vanish from their place in time of heat are the wicked. Bildad recognizes that by identifying with the wicked, Job's utterance in 6:15–17 may be heard as Job's testimony to his wickedness rather than a testimony to his friends' loss of loyalty.

Fourth, Bildad has heard Job's answer to Eliphaz' utterance in 5:2. In 5:2, Eliphaz characterized Job's speech in chapter 3 as vexation (כעש) and Job admitted that his speech in chapter 3 was his vexation (כעש) in 6:2, but Eliphaz' and Job's implications in their use of the word (כעש) differ. In 5:2, Eliphaz implied that Job needed to control his heated voice, because vexation may identify Job as a fool and get him killed, because

⁹³ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 179; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 148–49.

vexation kills the fool. However, Job justified his exasperation in 6:2–7 by asserting that God was not treating him appropriately. Since God had treated Job inappropriately, his vexation would not identify him as wicked. However, Bildad disagrees with Job in 8:2–3, because according to Bildad, God does not pervert justice and right (8:3) and in the end Job's voice is still a vexation, which identifies him as wicked and will kill him just as a great wind brought death to his children (1:19; 8:3–4).

Also, while Job closed his speech at the end of chapter 7 (7:21b) with "For now I shall lie in the earth; you will seek me, but I shall not be" (וְאֵינִי), Bildad ends his speech at the end of chapter 8 (8:22) with "Those who hate you will be clothed with shame, and the tent of the wicked will be no more" (אֵינֶנּוּ). Both speeches have a similar ending using the word "אֵין." By ending with the same word but with a different suffix, Bildad's last word echoes Job's last word. Consequently, Bildad's ending conveys a double meaning. The first meaning may be, if Job is pure and upright and seeks God's favor, God would clothe Job's enemies with shame and their tent would be no more. By dint of the first meaning, Bildad's intention is to send a message to Job that he needs to be pure and upright and to seek God.

The second meaning delivers the reason behind Bildad's intention in the first meaning. Bildad's last words are an answer to the end of Job's speech in 7:21b.⁹⁴ This response to the end of Job's speech serves to deliver an implicit message that Job's last word in chapter 7 reflects Job's wickedness. According to Bildad's last words, the one who shall be no more is the wicked (the tent of the wicked). By uttering the words to Job, Bildad may expect Job to recall his last words in 7:21b as proof of his wickedness, since he himself asserted that he shall be no more. In seeing how Job's words returned to him, Bildad wants Job to recognise the need to seek God because of his sinfulness/wickedness.⁹⁵

Job's Knowledge

One of the main reasons for Bildad warning Job to examine his own sinfulness may be derived from his perception of Job's ignorance of the retributive order of the world. Bildad suggests that Job should inquire from the

⁹⁴ Seow, "Poetic Closure in Job," 440.

⁹⁵ Seow ("Poetic Closure in Job," 440) attests, "In light of Bildad's echo of Job's conclusion in 7:21b, one might note that in 7:21b one finds resonance in Bildad's suggestion that Job should look to God."

ancestors, because Job cannot know everything and needs to learn from what his ancestors have found and learned (8:8–10). Why does Bildad suggest Job ask the ancestors for knowledge/wisdom?

Bildad heard how Eliphaz had tried to teach Job about the truth of the retributive order of the world. In 5:24, 25 and 27, Eliphaz taught Job clearly and directly to know (יָדַעַתָּה) the retributive order of the world. Particularly, Eliphaz emphasized that Job needed to hear and know the order, because it is true: “See, we have searched this out; it is true. Hear, and know it for yourself” (5:27: הִנֵּה-זֹאת חִקְרֵנוּ כֵּן-הִיא שְׁמַעְנָה וְאַתָּה דַּע-לָךְ). Although Eliphaz was clear on emphasizing and teaching the truth, Bildad perceives that after hearing Job’s utterance in 6:24: “Teach me and I will be silent; make me understand how I have gone wrong,” Job still seems to reject Eliphaz’ teaching and displays his ignorance.

Bildad supports the validity of Eliphaz’ teaching on the retributive order by eliciting the wisdom of former/beginning (רִישוֹן)⁹⁶ generations (8:8). Eliphaz’ teaching is not only based on his own experience (4:8, 13–16; 5:3, 27) but also derived from the beginning of the generations/world. When Job asks the former generations about the order, Job will come to understand the order as the truth. Why does Job need to ask the former generations in order to understand the retributive order of the world?

The answer lies in the fact that the duration of a single human being’s life is too ephemeral to enable him or her to understand the cosmic order. It is impossible to know everything (8:9) by simply going on one’s own experience. Bildad may understand that Job’s time is too short to learn and understand the truth of the retributive order of the world, because Job explicitly refers to the way the fewness of his days prevents him from seeing either good or truth in 7.6–7:

My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle⁹⁷ and come to their end without hope.⁹⁸ Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good’

(יָמֵי קָלוּ מִנִּי אָרֶג וַיִּכְלוּ בְּאֶפֶס תְּקוּהָ זָכַר כִּי רוּחַ חַיִּי לֹא וּבִתְשׁ עֵינַי לִרְאוֹת טוֹב)

⁹⁶ The word “רִישוֹן” in the phrase “former generations” in 8:8 may indicate the beginning of the world, since the word means ‘first’, ‘beginning’ and ‘former’. (BDB, 911); Cf. Num. 10:13; Job 15:7; Isa. 41:4

⁹⁷ BDB (71) translates the word “אָרֶג” as a ‘loom’ and Holladay (p. 26) translates it as a ‘shuttle’. Clines (*Job 1–20*, 163) states that the word “אָרֶג” is most likely to be translated as a ‘shuttle’. Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 66), Pope (*Job*, 57), Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 159) and Habel (*The Book of Job*, 151) also translate the word as a ‘shuttle.’

⁹⁸ Habel (*The Book of Job*, 151) translates the word “תְּקוּהָ” as ‘thread’ rather than ‘hope’. Clines (*Job 1–20*, 186) shows more sources that translate it as ‘thread’, such as NEB, TOB, Dhorme, Horst, Rowley, Anderson. However, BDB (876), Holladay (394), Gordis (*The Book*

To address the issue of the lack of time, Bildad suggests Job should seek wisdom/understanding/knowledge from the ancestors who could teach and tell him words from their heart/understanding⁹⁹ (ומלבם יוצאו מלים) (8:10). Also, Bildad may anticipate that when Job asks and learns the wisdom/understanding/knowledge from the former generations, he might become silent as per Job's suggestion in 6:24.

To readers, Bildad's treatment of Job's wisdom/understanding/knowledge actually implies the limit of knowledge in the book of *Job*. The problem of understanding/knowledge/wisdom starts in the prologue. In reading Bildad's utterance in 8:10 "Will they not teach you and tell you and utter words out of their understanding?" (מלבם), the word "their heart/understanding" (לבם) requires a chronotopic reading, because it refers to God's speech in the prologue. In 1:8 and 2:3, God asked *hassatan* whether or not he had put his heart on Job: השמת לבך על עבדי איוב. As readers perceived, the question about *hassatan*'s heart became grounds for Job's suffering. In the prologue, God wanted to hear what *hassatan* thought of Job in his heart.

At the same time, through Bildad's voice in chapter 8, readers may read *hassatan*'s voice in the voice of the former generations, which Bildad mentions in verse 10. As Bildad suggests that Job heed the words of the former generations regarding the retributive order of the world out of their heart, readers may hear *hassatan*'s words concerning human beings' knowledge about the order out of his heart, since *hassatan* challenged God based on his knowledge concerning human beings' understanding of the retributive order of the world. *Hassatan*'s voice out of his heart/understanding might indicate that all human beings including Job know only of, and rely totally on, the retributive order. Human beings are incapable of going beyond the knowledge of the retributive order of the world.

Readers may find similarities but also differences in the examination of Eliphaz' and Bildad's voices. Now, readers may raise a question about the last friend's voice—Zophar's voice. How is Zophar's voice similar and different from Eliphaz' and Bildad's voices? How does Zophar respond to

of Job, 66), Pope (*Job*, 57), Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 159) and LXX support the translation 'hope.' This book chooses the translation 'hope' rather than 'thread,' since Job's voice about the ceasing of his days represents his hopeless life and also even the translation of 'thread' in the phrase "without/for the lack of thread" (באפס תקוה) delivers the implication of Job's hopeless life, in chapter 7, metaphorically (cf. Habel, *The Book of Job*, 159).

⁹⁹ "Heart" (לב) is understood as the seat of intelligence and may be used to mean understanding or knowledge in the Hebrew Bible. Cf. Clines, *Job 1–20*, 207; Habel, *The Book of Job*, 176; Exod. 9:14; Deut. 29:3; Job 12:24; 1 Sam. 4:20; 1 Kgs 3:9; Jer. 5:21.

Job, Eliphaz, and Bildad? In the section on Zophar's voice, we will try to read the answers.

Zophar's Voice

Job's Words

Like Bildad, Zophar opens his mouth to speak with criticism of Job's words. Zophar perceives Job's words in chapters 9 and 10 as babble and nonsense, because he has read/heard Job's words in previous chapters as being a way for Job to separate himself from Eliphaz, Bildad and even God. As Eliphaz perceived Job's utterance in chapter 3, Zophar recognizes that Job intends to establish himself as his own independent being and his words as monologic words. However, Zophar views Job's attempt as futile and impossible.

Then, how does Zophar come to understand Job's intention to form his words as monologic, independent and authoritative words? In chapters 9 and 10, Job starts his speech by responding to Eliphaz' and Bildad's instructions about God and the retributive order of the world. Job replies in chapter 9 that Eliphaz' and Bildad's words were not so unfamiliar to him that he needs to learn them. Job himself already had that knowledge about God and the retributive order.¹⁰⁰ However, the point that Job could not comprehend was that he knew that he was innocent (9:15, 20–21) and he also knew that God knew of his innocence (10:7), and yet he was still suffering. That is the point which both his friends, Eliphaz and Bildad, had missed. Since Job indicates that he already has the knowledge that Eliphaz and Bildad instructed him to learn and knowledge of what they did not know, Zophar assumes that Job thinks he is perfect and therefore does not need his two friends for his identity.

Further, in chapter 10, Job defines God as his enemy and adversary. As his contender, Job asks God for the reason why He stands against him. Job cannot understand God. Job asserts that God condemns and contends against Job without reason.¹⁰¹ From Zophar's point of view, when Job uses the imperative verb "remember" (זכר) in 10:9–14, Job seems to be authorising, even teaching, God.

¹⁰⁰ For readers, Job's knowledge about the retributive order is well described in his speeches in the prologue.

¹⁰¹ According to 2:3, Job's speech is correct. God said to *hassatan* that *hassatan* incited him against Job to destroy him without reason (חנם).

Particularly, Job's speech in 9:20–22 heightens the urgency for Zophar to criticize Job's words. In 9:20–22, Job says "I am blameless" (תם-אני). Zophar may read two different meanings from this sentence. The first meaning may indicate Job's purity and innocence from an ontological point of view. While Eliphaz proclaimed that all human beings deserve suffering and, since Job is a human being, he deserves suffering, and Bildad warned Job to search for his hidden sins, Job insists that he does not deserve the suffering because he is pure and innocent.

Unlike Eliphaz and Bildad, Zophar does not use the fates of either the wicked or the righteous to help Job to see himself as a sinner, but rather uses Job's lack of knowledge of the truth. The truth is that Job does not know/understand/acknowledge his sinfulness. By reading/hearing Job's words "I am blameless" (תם-אני), Zophar intends to point out that Job does not know that he does not know he is impure and sinful. Zophar's conception of Job's lack of knowledge of his sinfulness evokes him to create the meaning for Job's speeches in *Job* 3, 6–7, and 9–10 as empty words (בדיד: 11:3), to be filled in by his friends' words/answerability. According to Zophar, Job's lack of knowledge of the truth prevents him from hearing/reading himself as an impure and sinful being from his friends' speeches.

The second meaning is that Job's voice "I am blameless" may insinuate Job's perfect knowledge to Zophar. This perception may cause Zophar to read Job's speeches as a rejection of his friends' speeches. First, Zophar may read that Job rejected and ignored Eliphaz' nocturnal vision in 4:15–21. In 9:2, by emphasizing that he already knew that a mortal being cannot be righteous before God, Job seems to evaluate Eliphaz' revelatory utterance in 4:17 as nothing special, but something ordinary, which Job already and always knew. Further, by continuing to utter about God in the following verses (9:3–11), Job seems to interpret and provide a reason for Eliphaz' revelatory words in 4:18: God does not even trust His servants and charges His angels with error (4:18), because God is wise in heart and mighty in strength and no one can resist, contend with or answer him (9:3–4).

To Zophar, Job's dismissal of Eliphaz' nocturnal vision and words gives the impression that Job is mocking both Eliphaz' instructions (chapter 5) and Bildad's suggestion of learning from the former generations' teachings/understandings (8:8–10). In 5:27, Eliphaz required Job to know the retributive order of the world, since he, along with others,¹⁰² has searched

¹⁰² Eliphaz used the first person plural form for the verb "חקר." After reading Bildad's utterance, readers may perceive that Eliphaz' teachings are incorporated into the former generations' understandings/teachings.

this out (זאת חקרנוה) and knows it to be true. Also, in 8:8–10, Bildad suggested Job ask the former generations and consider what they have searched out/found (לחקר אבותם). However, Job implicitly declares that both Eliphaz' understanding/searching out (חקרנוה: 5:27) and the former generations' understanding/searching out (חקר: 8:8) might be unfeasible, because God is beyond understanding/searching out (עד-אין חקר) in 9:10. It is impracticable to search and understand God and his work, because his work is beyond human beings' understanding and human beings can neither see nor perceive him (8:11). Job's mocking and invalidation of Eliphaz' teachings and the former generations' understandings provoke Zophar to perceive that Job thinks that his understanding/teaching concerning the retributive order of the world and God goes far beyond his friends' and ancestors' understandings/teachings.

Zophar's perception concerning Job's confidence in his understandings/teachings is clearly reflected in his speech "And you say, My teaching¹⁰³ is pure, and I am clean in God's sight"¹⁰⁴ (ותאמר זך לקחי ובר הייתי בעיניך) 11:4). In the utterance, Zophar intends to show that he is quoting the words spoken from Job's mouth. However, "Job has not used these particular phrases,"¹⁰⁵ especially the phrase "My teaching (לקחי)¹⁰⁶ is pure." Rather, Zophar puts his words into Job's mouth, because he understands Job's protestation of innocence to be based upon his teaching/instruction/understanding (לקח). Since Zophar thinks that Job acknowledges his own understandings/teachings concerning his integrity and innocence to be accurate, Job protests his purity and integrity in the presence of God.¹⁰⁷

This perception provokes Zophar to respond to Job's speech, because Job's utterance does not make sense to Zophar, since according to Zophar's view, it is impossible for Job to gain the knowledge that he has already got without the input of his friends and ancestors. As with other human beings, Job needs to learn from others. Without others, Job's knowledge would not be perfect. Even his speeches in chapters 3, 6–7 and 9–10 have

¹⁰³ The word "לקח" means 'teaching' or 'instruction.' (BDB, 544; Holladay, 179)

¹⁰⁴ The translation is mine.

¹⁰⁵ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 260.

¹⁰⁶ Clines (*ibid*) claims that the word "לקח" is "a familiar term in wisdom literature (Prov. 1:5; 4:2; 9:9; 16:21, 23; Eccl. 8:8; cf. Isa. 29:24)." Cf. Deut. 32:2; Prov. 1:5; 4:2; 7:21; 9:9; Isa. 29:24.

¹⁰⁷ Interestingly enough, Isa. 11:1–5 designates the one who has the spirit of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord as the one who is righteous or possesses righteousness.

probably been created by Job as a result of others and their speeches.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the fact that Job proclaims his knowledge is perfect and his words are complete without others delivers an implied meaning to Zophar that Job does not yet know who he is and how he exists in the dialogue with his friends.

However, to readers, Zophar's perception of Job's words as nonsense actually reveals Zophar's limited reading of Job in *Job*. The word "תם" may steer *Job*'s readers to re-read the word "תם" in the narrator's voice and God's voice in the prologue. In 1:1, the narrator introduced Job as a blameless/perfect (תם) man. As discussed in chapter 2 of the book, rather than providing a finalized meaning for Job in *Job*, the narrator's voice provides an opportunity for readers to create a meaning for the word "תם." The narrator's voice heightens readers' interest in hearing God's voice in the heavenly council. In 1:8 and 2:3, God proclaims that Job is blameless/perfect (תם).

Readers who read God's voice in 1:8 and 2:3 may read Zophar's speech in chapter 11 as a misreading of Job because of his chronotopic limitations, since Zophar, like Job and the other friends is in a specific time and defined space. Zophar's chronotopic limitations prevent him from knowing the words that were shared between God and *hassatan* in the heavenly scene. These chronotopic limitations may also lead Job's friends to speak about God in an inappropriate manner (42:7).

Job's Knowledge

If Zophar's speech about Job's utterances reveals Zophar's limited knowledge about God and the retributive order of the world to readers, then does Job have an unlimited or perfect knowledge of God and the order of the world? A reading of Zophar's utterance concerning Job's knowledge leads readers to perceive Job's knowledge as being as limited as that of his friends.¹⁰⁹

Due to his reading of Job's utterance as a claim to perfect knowledge or wisdom, Zophar presents a hypothetical scenario to Job in an effort to

¹⁰⁸ It is true according to Bakhtin. Bakhtin (*Dialogic Imagination*, 293) claims, "the word in language is half someone else's."

¹⁰⁹ That Job has limited knowledge does not mean that Job agrees with his friends in what they think they know about God and the retributive truth. Job has a different understanding from his friends' perceptions concerning God and the retributive order of the world. This book will deal with Job's limited knowledge in the next chapter.

change Job's perception of himself to one who possesses imperfect knowledge. If God were to speak to Job, Job would understand that it is difficult to perceive God's words, because God cannot be fathomed by human beings' limited capacities.

Specifically, Zophar tries to persuade Job to recognize the impossibility of having perfect knowledge about God by repeating the same word used by Job when he questioned his friends' implication that they knew God. In 11:10, Zophar says, "If he passes through,¹¹⁰ and imprisons, and assembles for Judgment,¹¹¹ who can hinder him?" (אם-יחלף ויסגיר ויקהיל ומי ישיבנו). By using the verb "יחלף" with the other two verbs (סגר and קהל), Zophar strengthens his argument about God's inaccessibility to human beings in verses 7–9. However, the same verb "יחלף" was used by Job in 9:11 to mock Eliphaz' and Bildad's arguments and knowledge concerning God's keeping of the retributive order. In using the same verb that Job used to mock his friends, Zophar enables Job to remember what he did to his friends and in doing so, mocks Job's claim to perfect knowledge. The common verb "יחלף," which has been used by Job, is employed uniquely by Zophar to deliver his planned communication to Job.¹¹²

According to Zophar, Job does not know what God knows. Zophar's argument might appeal to readers' understanding of Job's chronotopic limitations in the prologue. Just as his friends are defined in a specific time and space, Job is presented as one who is defined in a specific time and space; according to the chronotope of the prologue. Job is not an omniscient being in the prologue. Therefore, Zophar's voice concerning Job's knowledge is accurate. Job's knowledge is not perfect. However, readers may have already figured out Job's limited knowledge from his speeches in chapters 7 and 10, since Job asked questions about the reason behind God's animosity against him.

¹¹⁰ Gordis (*The Book of Job*, 118) translates the verb "יחלף" as 'seizes hold'. Pope (*Job*, p. 83) translates it as 'overlook'. However, Clines (*Job 1–20*, 253) translates it as 'passes by'. Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 220) translates it as 'vorübergeht'. Also, Habel (*The Book of Job*, 202) translates it as 'glides past.' The book supports the translations of Clines Fohrer and Habel and translates it as 'passes through'. The image of God's passing by or through indicates Zophar's image of God as the One who governs and sustains the retributive order of the world.

¹¹¹ The book translates the verb "יקהיל" in a legal sense. God as a judge calls the court or assembles his court for judgment. BDB (875), Clines (*Job 1–20*, 255) and Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 220: "und (das Gericht) einberuft") support a legal sense for the verb.

¹¹² Bakhtin (*Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 103–31) states that the repeatable aspects of a language are employed by an author or a speaker to express his or her unrepeatable planned communication.

Then does Zophar argue against Job on the basis of the same meaning that Job gives to his utterance? If so, then Zophar has no need to correct Job's view of himself. How are Job's view and Zophar's view different? The subsequent section addresses this question.

Job's Fate

Unlike Eliphaz and Bildad, Zophar looks at Job's heart (לב) as the key to Job's restoration. Eliphaz and Bildad suggested to Job he seek God and make a case and ask favor from God, but Zophar suggests Job direct his heart rightly (לבך) (אם-אתה הכינות לבך: if you direct your heart rightly) in 11:13. Zophar recognizes Job's problem. Job needs to know God rightly even before he seeks and prays to him. Zophar continues to offer Job a future. If Job puts his heart rightly on God and puts away the iniquities from his hands, Zophar sees that Job will not only forget his misery but will also come to understand how God will take away his suffering. Eventually, Job will be restored to his former life.

For readers, Zophar's utterance in 11:17–18 recalls Eliphaz' utterance and destroys Job's speech about cursing his birthday. Unlike Bildad's speech in 8:14 in which Job's loss of confidence and hope makes him comparable to the wicked, but like Eliphaz' assurance that Job's fear of God is his confidence and his integrity is his hope in 4:6, Zophar mentions that Job will regain his confidence and hope in 11:18. Zophar's enunciation of Job's confidence and hope enables readers to read Zophar's utterance as Job's reclamation of his fear of God and integrity.

At the same time, Zophar's utterance in 11:17 "And your life will be brighter than the noonday; its darkness will be like the morning" (ומצהרים) (יקום חלד תעפה כבקר תהיה) is an answer to Job's last utterance in the previous chapter (10:21–22) "Before I go, never to return, to the land of gloom and deep darkness,¹¹³ the land of gloom and chaos, where light is like darkness" (בטרם אלך ולא אשוב אל-ארץ חשך וצלמות ארץ עפתה כמו) (אפל-צלמות ולא סדרים ותפע כמו-אפל).¹¹⁴ Zophar assures Job that his future will turn out to be the exact opposite of what Job said in chapter 10. Also Zophar's echo of Job's words from chapter 10 enables readers to read/hear Job's voice from chapter 3. In chapter 3, Job cursed his birthday by

¹¹³ The word 'צלמות' indicates a death-like darkness and a death-like darkness symbolises Job's death. (cf. Clines, *Job* 1–20, 223; Seow, "Poetic closure in Job," 441 n. 22)

¹¹⁴ Cf. Seow, "Poetic Closure in Job," 442.

wishing to darken the day and remove light from the day. In Zophar's voice, his future will be transformed into hope like a brighter light and morning (11:17), although Job's intention in cursing his birthday, light and darkness had been to eradicate his estranged chronotope.

Conclusion

The chapter argues that Eliphaz encourages Job to endure the suffering and to have hope for restoration in his future life, since Eliphaz believes that Job is a righteous sufferer and his suffering would be just a temporary phenomenon and Job's bright future must come. Unlike Eliphaz, Bildad has doubts about Job's innocence and integrity, because Bildad hears Job's voice complaining against God. Particularly, Bildad perceives Job's ignorance of the retributive order of the world from Job's attitude to Eliphaz' and the former generations' teaching about the order. Also, Zophar points out Job's sinfulness and unrighteousness because of how Job replies to Eliphaz, Bildad, and their teachings. For Zophar, Job is certainly a sinner, but he simply does not acknowledge his sinfulness. Therefore, Zophar believes that if Job puts his heart to, and asks favor from, God, God will restore him.

Thus, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar respond to Job's voices to encourage, warn and instruct him to find his hidden iniquities, seek God and have hope in his life. Job's friends thought that Job thought he could exist independently—without God and his friends. This perception provokes their answerability to provide Job with hope and make his life complete, because Job's attempt to be independent and authoritative may eventually destroy him as an entity.

Job's friends' answerabilities reveal each friend's unique ideological perception concerning Job and Job's identity. Eliphaz did not give up on Job's innocence and purity. However, unlike Eliphaz, Bildad started to doubt Job's innocence and purity and Zophar was certain of Job's loss of innocence and purity. The change in the friends' attitude toward Job from an assertion of Job's innocence to a doubt of it and then to certainty of Job's wickedness had been caused by hearing/reading Job's speeches in chapters 3, 6–7 and 9–10. By responding to Job's speeches in 3, 6–7 and 9–10, each friend might have found evidence to prove Job's sinfulness/wickedness

In terms of Job's sinfulness, Job's three friends also developed their own ideas of the reason for Job's suffering. Going from Eliphaz' voice to

Bildad's voice to Zophar's voice, readers may have seen the idea develop from Job's suffering being caused by his hidden sinfulness to Job's suffering being caused by his lack of knowledge/understanding concerning God, the retributive order of the world and especially his hidden sins. Through the friends' voices in *Job*, *Job* delivers to readers the implication of Job's friends which is that a man whose name is Job is not perfect (תם). By implying that a man is not perfect/blameless (תם), the voices of Job's three friends echo *hassatan's* voice, which challenged God, who was sure of Job's perfect piety/purity (תם), and *hassatan's* voice, which also presupposed that a man's knowledge is incapable of going beyond what the traditional knowledge of the retributive order of the world has taught him from the beginning/former generations. Consequently, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar may agree that the acknowledgement of the limit of a man's knowledge and wisdom may lead him to return to God and is certainly a wiser way for Job to find a way out of his suffering.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DIALOGIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE VOICES IN THE PROLOGUE AND THOSE IN THE DIALOGUE SECTION

In chapters 2, 3 and 4, we have attempted to distinguish how each identifiable voice in the text plays its role in defining Job in *Job* 1–11. In chapter 2, we examined how the narrator's voice invites readers to come to their own definition of Job as a perfectly pious man by introducing ambiguity into the narratorial voice as well as into the voices of the other characters. In chapters 3 and 4, we delved into reading Job's voice and his three friends' voices in order to identify the dialogic interaction between the voices of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and how their voices defined Job. Eventually, readers will have read that the attempts of Job's voice and the three friends' voices to define what kind of man Job is have generated different images of Job.

Thus far, we have examined voices within genre boundaries: voices in the prose/prologue and voices in the poem/dialogue section. As a result of examining voices within each specific genre boundary, we can make the following statement: although the voices in each different genre have dialogical interrelationships with other voices, they continue to express a range of different perceptions as to the kind of man Job is. We as readers may consider that the production of these different perceptions of Job fails to satisfy our desire to finalize Job in *Job*. How do we as readers come to a satisfactory understanding from our readings of the various voices pertaining to Job in *Job* 1–11? If we are to respond to the book as a whole, we will need to find a way to understand the relationship between the voices not just within each genre or chronotope, but between the chronotopes.

In this chapter, we re-examine the voices by crossing between these generically distinct sections. In doing so, we hope to show that the voices in both the prologue and dialogue are necessary and essential to provide an adequate definition of Job in *Job*, since it is not sufficient to read just the voices in the prologue or just those in the dialogue. This will also show further contradictions in the idea that describing Job as 'perfect' can sum him up. As Bakhtin states:

And even in the case where we give a complete definition of a human being as a whole—that is, where we define him as a kind, a vicious, or a good person, or as an egoist, etc.—such definitions express the practical position

we assume in relation to him in our lived life: they not so much define him as propose a prognosis of what we can and what we cannot expect from him. Or they may simply be a matter of chance impressions of the whole or, finally, a spurious empirical generalization. In life, we are interested not in the whole of a human being, but only in those particular actions on his part with which we are compelled to deal in living our life and which are, in one way or another, of special interest to us. And, as we shall see below, least of all are we ourselves able or competent to perceive in ourselves the given whole of our own personality.¹

Therefore, Job the character is reliant on the intersubjective relationship of voices for his definition in *Job*.² To demonstrate just how the various voices in the two different genres dialogically interact with each other to define Job in *Job*, this chapter examines the following key words:

"blameless" (תם), "upright" (ישר), "fear of God" (ירא אלהים), "turn away from evil" (סר מרע), "the days" (הימים), "the day" (היום), "dust" (עפר), "sin" (חטא), "womb" (בטן), "give" (נתן), "return" (שוב), "heart" (לב), "without reason" (חנם), "hedge in" (שכת), "blessings" (ברכים), and "knees" (ברכים).

The point is to explore how these key words in the prologue echo in the voices of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar in the dialogue. The words may be repeated in the two genres, but we will argue that their meaning shifts as a result of the dialogue and that the meaning of each of the words in the dialogue is dependent on but different from their use in the prose. This will allow us to show the dialogic relationship between the voices and to prove that the voices in the prologue echoing in the dialogue are not merely repetitions but creatively renewed voices in the dialogue. This approach draws on and illustrates a fundamental claim made by Bakhtin that all speakers are creators³ who creatively form meanings out of words/language, which are fundamentally chronotopic.⁴

To understand why and how the key words in the prologue echo in the voices in the dialogue, we need to examine the dialogic relationship which exists between the prologue and dialogue. The existence of a dialogic relationship between the prologue and the dialogue in *Job* is not a

¹ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 5.

² Peeren (*Intersubjectivities and Popular Culture*, 11–17) contends that one's existence as a human being depends on others, since an identity creatively constructs a sense of belonging. Constructing a sense of belonging is not an individual act but a cooperative and collective act.

³ Michael Holquist, "Answering as Authoring: Mikhail Bakhtin's Trans-Linguistics," *Critical Inquiry* 10 (1983): 315.

⁴ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic imagination*, 251.

new idea. Newsom has already contended⁵ that the two different genres, which are the prose and the poem, involve different moral imaginations and quarrel with each other according to the Bakhtinian dialogical model. This chapter takes the same stance as Newsom in terms of the *dialogic* relationship between the prologue and dialogue. However, it takes a different position from Newsom in terms of the *kind* of dialogic relationship that exists between the two different genres.

The prologue seems to have a simple,⁶ coherent narrative form whereas the dialogue seems to have different, diverse and incoherent colors and forms. However, though the two genres seem to present two different forms, my argument is that the prologue⁷ and dialogue together depict the kind of man Job is and create a definition of him for readers in *Job*. The voices from both the prologue and the dialogue are necessary to complete the presentation of Job in *Job*, since it is not possible for the prologue alone to present the kind of man Job is or for the dialogue in *Job* to exist without the prologue.

In order to say why it is impossible for the prologue by itself to present the kind of man Job is, chapter 2 explained that, rather than providing a clear definition of Job as a man, the narrator's voice is ambiguous. Although in 1:1–3, the narrator seems to clearly present Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God, a shunner of evil and a very rich and great man, the narrator's voice in the verses does not deliver lucid and definitive meanings for Job's identity/character as a perfectly pious man to readers as far as the Bakhtinian dialogic idea is concerned.

If the first three verses of *Job* did provide a clear definition of Job as a perfectly pious man to readers, only these three verses would be needed to complete the book of *Job*. If the narrator had defined Job clearly, definitively and exhaustively in the first three verses, Job would no longer be living and speaking,⁸ because "characters in a Bakhtinian sense can only be considered to be 'alive' to the extent that they remain incomplete and

⁵ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 21–31.

⁶ Mathewson (*Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 39) describes the prologue as "a story world of wonderful simplicity with a focus on a single man of the deepest moral character."

⁷ As a prosaic genre, the epilogue goes with the prologue, but the chapter does not include the epilogue even though it presupposes the epilogue as being the same genre as the prologue. The epilogue may depict Job as a man in a different image than the prologue, but, the study of the epilogue is beyond the scope of the book, because the scope of the book covers chapters 1–11.

⁸ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 13.

unfinalized.⁹ If Job the character was unable to live, act and speak in the prologue, then it would not be possible for the dialogue section and the epilogue in *Job* to survive. For contemporary readers, the fact that the dialogue and the epilogue have survived until now demonstrates that the narrator's voice describing Job as a perfectly pious man in the first three verses is neither finalized nor exhaustive. Particularly in 2:6, the fact that Job's *nefesh* remains shows that Job is still 'alive': that Job is still a living being indicates that he is unfinalized. Since Job is unfinalized, Job's voice describing himself and others' voices doing the same need to be heard in order to depict what kind of man Job is in *Job* 1–11.

Moreover, the characters' voices in the prologue are unable to read what kind of man Job is in his entirety. According to Bakhtin's idea concerning the relationship between the author and the characters/heroes as applied to *Job*, the polyphonic author in the prologue sees not only in the direction in which the characters in the prologue look but also in a different direction that is inaccessible to the characters.¹⁰ Consequently, characters' voices can speak only in the one direction in which the characters look. Since they cannot see in any of the other directions, the characters' definition of the kind of man Job is inadequate, for the characters' voices are limited and fixed in one direction.

The only way to look in a different direction that is inaccessible to characters is to perceive the narrator's surplus of seeing Job, which has been bestowed¹¹ by the polyphonic author. However, a dialogic interaction with the narrator's voice is necessary to perceive the narrator's surplus of seeing Job,¹² but such interaction between the narrator's voice and the characters' voices is not viable in the prologue because of the boundary between the narrator and the characters. The only possible way to achieve a dialogical interaction with the narrator's voice is for the narrator's voice to be infused into and to echo from other characters' voices.¹³ However, according to Bakhtin, there is no penetration unless the narrator relinquishes his or her own voice and becomes silent.¹⁴ As such, since the prologue does not allow the silence of the narrator's voice until the dialogue section, it

⁹ Webb, *Mark at the Threshold*, 20.

¹⁰ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 13.

¹¹ The book deals with the narrator as one of the characters in *Job*. Therefore, the narrator's voice must be given by the polyphonic author according to Bakhtin. (cf. *Ibid.*, 12–13)

¹² *Ibid.*, 22–23.

¹³ Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 95–98.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 101.

is not possible for the characters to provide an adequate definition of Job as a perfectly pious man in the prologue.

Second, why is the dialogue's existence dependent on the prologue in *Job*? The question may presuppose that the dialogue can exist without the prologue, because both the prologue and the dialogue are two distinctly different genres reflecting Job's two different voices and attitudes. Job's voice as a quoted voice in the prologue seems to be carried by the narrator's voice, which is a quoting voice. Also, Job's attitude fits well into the image as presented by the narrator in 1:1–5.

However, Job's voice and attitude in the dialogue reflect a completely different voice and worldview. Job's voice in the dialogue is a leading responsive voice, since Job's voice initiated the dialogue by breaking the silence (3:1) as a response to what happened to him.¹⁵ Job's attitude is one that challenges God rather than one that submits to God. Due to the disparities between Job in the prologue and in the dialogue, how can readers recognize the dialogue's reliance on the prologue for its existence?

First, although the dialogue appears to be an independent entity from the prologue, the existence of the voices in the dialogue relies on the voices in the prologue. As I argued above, if the character of Job had been finalized in the prologue, then it would be impossible for the dialogue in *Job* to survive. Therefore, if the voices in the prologue provided an adequate and determined meaning by which to finalize Job, then the voices in the dialogue would not need to exist. Since the voices in the prologue were unable to offer a clear and determined meaning of Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil, the voices in the dialogue would be expected to be heard after the voices in the prologue seeking a satisfactory meaning for Job to complement the voices in the prologue.

Second, the meanings of the voices in the dialogue materialize from the meanings in the voices in the prologue. Bakhtin states,

There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context. . . . Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of past centuries can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all)—they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue.¹⁶

According to this Bakhtinian idea, readers may perceive that the past meanings, which have been produced in the dialogue in the past, survive

¹⁵ According to Bakhtin (*Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, 68), an utterance is inherently responsive.

¹⁶ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 170.

as new and different meanings in the words in the present dialogue. Readers may extend this idea to understand that present meanings in present utterances are creatively discovered and formed because of past meanings created in past dialogues. We as readers may apply this perception to the voices in the prologue and dialogue of *Job* in the following way. The meanings of the voices in the dialogue of *Job* come as a result of a creative act of discovering the new and different meanings in the voices in the prologue of *Job*. The existence of the meanings of the voices in the prologue makes it possible for the new and different meanings of the voices in the dialogue to exist.

The different meanings of the voices in the two different genres complement each other to seek an adequate definition of Job as a pious man. Bakhtin elucidates the principle that two different perspectives or voices can complement each other using

the example of two people looking over each other's shoulders. As both people occupy a different position, they look at the same thing in a different way, thus complementing each other's perspective.¹⁷

Hence, the present chapter argues that the juxtaposition of the two different genres showcases the complementary relationship of the two genres in their attempt to provide a satisfactory definition of Job as a pious man in *Job* 1–11, rather than thinking of the two genres as quarreling with each other.¹⁸

Readers may clearly perceive the complementary relationship between the prologue and the dialogue by understanding the principle of the creative act of discovering the different meanings of the key words in the dialogue from the key words in the prologue. To understand the principle of the act of creating the different meanings of the key words in the dialogue, readers need to apply Bakhtin's concept of 'great time', because 'great time' denotes time in which words have no limits in the dialogic context and in which the key words disclose new and different meanings in the dialogue. Great time reveals the fullness of the works of the voices both in the prologue and the dialogue to seek a satisfactory definition of what kind of man Job is in *Job* 1–11.¹⁹

¹⁷ L. Juliana M. Claassens, "Biblical Theology as Dialogue: Continuing the Conversation on Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Theology," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122 (2003): 132; Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World* (London: Routledge, 1990), 21; Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 41.

¹⁸ Newsom (*The Book of Job*, 24–25) argues that the juxtaposition of the two different genres—the prose and the poem—demonstrates the quarrel between the two genres.

¹⁹ Cf. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 4–5.

Bakhtin defines 'great time' as the "infinite and unfinalized dialogue in which no meaning dies."²⁰ Moreover, William D. Lindsey defines Bakhtin's idea of 'great time' in the following way:

Great Time is thus time in which the past inhabits the present in voices that did not have their full say in the past and time in which the future enters the present proleptically, insofar as it opens space here and now for voices that otherwise would have no opportunity to speak.²¹

This concept of 'great time' is further explained by Bakhtin's understanding of such works as those of Homer, Socrates, Dante and Shakespeare. Such works in antiquity or the middle ages did not have boundaries but existed in centuries (in great time) and furthermore, "they live a more intense and fuller life than in their own present moment."²² For example, Shakespeare's works become abundantly meaningful in 'great time,' because in Shakespeare's posthumous life, the meanings of his works became "richer and fuller than . . . their lives in their own time." What is more, Bakhtin insists that the emergence of new meanings for Shakespeare's works comes about "not only because of the efforts of later readers, but also because of what is really *in* them,"²³ because they have new semantic values, which were unavailable in their own time.²⁴

According to this explanation, readers may perceive that the genuine Bakhtinian idea of 'great time' is found in the development of meanings in the voice outside the text over the centuries. This idea of 'great time,' is applicable to the book of *Job* as a whole rather than to Job the character in the book of *Job*. The book of *Job* in 'great time' is a prime example of a work that has never perished but has been renewed in new contexts over the centuries in order to produce richer and fuller meanings.

This, however, is not the question before us. Rather, the concept of 'great time' may be useful in understanding the relationship within the text between the prologue and the dialogue. It is only natural for readers to ask the question whether or not it is legitimate to apply this principle to the voice inside the text. The answer can be found by extending the

²⁰ Ibid., 169.

²¹ William D. Lindsey, "'The Problem of Great Time': A Bakhtinian Ethics of Discourse," *The Journal of Religion* 73/3 (1993): 324.

²² Shepherd, "A Feeling for History?," 33.

²³ Morson and Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 287–88. (The emphasis is original)

²⁴ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 6.

concept metaphorically to illuminate the relationship between the text and its readers.²⁵

According to David Shepherd, the determination of a text's meaning

changes as it is read in new contexts by readers who are always historically and socially situated and who will always bring to it their own presuppositions, and in turn find these presuppositions modified in the process of dialogic interaction with the text.²⁶

Therefore, the meaning of *Job* is contingent on a reader's time and space, which determine the reader's social and historical context and shape their presuppositions or ideologies. In turn, a reader's presuppositions or ideologies in their social and historical context can also be modified in the process of a dialogic interaction with the text. Then, the reader brings the modified presuppositions to the text and reads different meanings from the text. In the hermeneutic cycle, the book of *Job* continues to survive over the centuries.

The argument here is that just as the book of *Job* survives in 'great time,' *Job* survives in the book of *Job* by renewing the meanings of words that have been used earlier in his story. *Job*'s act of renewing the meanings is evidence that his voice is 'living' and 'unfinalized.' Thus, the concept of *Job*'s 'living' voice in a *re-creation* of the meanings of the key words in *Job* can be grasped by the idea of 'great time.' In the context of the book, we as readers can see *Job* effectively 're-reading' the language used in the prologue in the dialogues. *Job* and his friends revisit and reuse words from the prologue, and from the speeches of the other dialogue partners, drawing out new meanings that are not apparent but latent in the prologue. "Reading is a process in time"²⁷ and the same principle can be applied to *Job*'s reading of the key words in the book.

At this point, the present chapter needs to clarify the idea of *Job* and his three friends as characters in the book 'reading/re-reading' specific words

²⁵ This metaphorical way of using the idea of 'great time' is legitimate in biblical scholarship. Due to the unique nature of the Bible in general and the Hebrew Bible in particular, biblical scholars modify and use the Bakhtinian idea of dialogism. For an example work, please see L. Juliana M. Claassens, "Rupturing God-Language: The Metaphor of God as Midwife in Psalm 22," in *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld*, ed. Linda Day & Carolyn Pressler (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

²⁶ David Shepherd, "The Authority of Meanings and the Meanings of Authority: Some Problems in the Theory of Reading," *Poetics Today* 7/1 (1986): 139.

²⁷ Gross, "Reading Time," 207.

in the book. Readers may hear several layers in Job's and his three friends' reading voices with respect to the key words in the dialogue, since readers hear their own reading voices in Job's and his three friends' reading voices. My point is not that Job and his three friends in the dialogue have read the prologue, although Job himself may remember his own speeches, but that the polyphonic author of *Job* is communicating with the readers by allowing Job and his three friends to use and rework these terms. The reader is invited to reread the prologue through Job's and the three friends' voices, and in that sense, Job and his three friends as characters are 'reading/re-reading' the prologue, but that is a kind of metaphorical extension of the meaning.

In this fashion, readers may perceive that the time difference between Job's reading of the prologue and the dialogue cannot be perceived as merely a simple chronological order or 'small time,'²⁸ which is "the present moment and the immediate and the imaginable future."²⁹ Rather, Job's reading in both the prologue and the dialogue can be perceived within the context of 'great time,' because the prologue and the dialogue are two different chronotopes and present different social and historical contexts.

Clearly, *Job* 2:13 denotes a shift/change in chronotope. *Job* 2:13 mentions that no words/language were/was exchanged for seven days and seven nights. Paradoxically, *Job* 2:13 uses language to show that there was no language between Job and his friends. Without such language, readers may never realize that words/language between Job and his friends were absent. Because *Job* 2:13 uses language to state the absence of language, readers come to know that language is missing between Job and his friends.

Since chronotope is a phenomenon in language, if there is no language, there would be no chronotope. Thus, when *Job* 2:13 signals that there is no language between Job and his friends the text is in fact stating that there is no chronotope between Job and his friends. Ironically, there is chronotope since language exists to express the absence of chronotope. Particularly in *Job* 2:13, this paradoxical phenomenon acts to denote a shift/change in chronotope.

Essentially, *Job* 2:13 uses language to mark the temporal pause in chronotope for the shift. Just as in physics where time and space need

²⁸ I have already discussed 'small time' on page 130 in chapter 3.

²⁹ The concept is understood as the opposite of 'great time' and is called 'small time'. See Shepherd, "A Feeling for History?," 34.

to pause temporarily in order to change direction, since chronotope is the intrinsic connectedness between time and space, a temporal pause in chronotope is required in the text in order to change chronotope. Upon noticing this temporal pause in chronotope, readers may detect a change in chronotope.

The shift in chronotope signals the change in the narrator's voice. Following the silence between Job and his friends, readers may notice that the narrator also becomes silent. In his or her silence, the narrator's voice starts to penetrate into characters' voices³⁰ in the dialogue and to let Job and other characters perceive a surplus of seeing Job in order to read what they—particularly Job—had not read about Job in the prologue.³¹ Readers may hear characters' double voices speaking their own voices and echoing the narrator's voice simultaneously in the dialogue. The narrator's voice does not vanish in the dialogue but rather infuses into the characters' voices there.³²

In the event, the different chronotope of the dialogue induces Job to view himself with a different ideology in the dialogue. With a different ideology, Job tries to redefine his identity by finding his way in the estranged chronotope. Job's voice providing a different identity in an estranged chronotope provokes the three friends' voices to respond to Job's voice. Without the prologue, Job's reading voice responding to the prologue could never exist and without Job's responsive voice, his three friends' voices responding to Job's voices would also never exist. Without the voices heard/read by readers in the prologue, the voices in the dialogue cannot be read by readers in the present time. The dialogue is a continuation of the prologue.

In what follows, I would like to delve into how the characters' voices—Job's, Eliphaz', Bildad's and Zophar's—in the dialogue echo the voices in the prologue and create different meanings from the voices in the prologue, specifically by analyzing their readings of the key words in the dialogue.

In order to examine the dialogical interrelationship between the voices in the prologue and Job's voice in the dialogue, it is necessary for readers

³⁰ Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin*, 101.

³¹ See 169n12; Actually, the narrator provides a surplus of seeing Job to Job by introducing Job's three friends. Job's perception of a surplus of seeing through his three friends' act will be discussed more below.

³² We will discuss the relationship between the narrator's voice and Job's/other characters' voices in detail later.

to answer these questions: How is Job's voice produced in the dialogue? Which voices from the prologue does Job's voice in the dialogue echo?

Readers who read Job's voices from the prologue and dialogue may question why the two voices are distinct, even though they emanate from the same character.³³ Job's two voices are like the two sides of a coin. Both of Job's voices together *seek*³⁴ to define Job as a wise and innocent man in *Job*. Then, how is Job's voice in the dialogue produced?

As mentioned above, the narrator's voice in the first three verses of the first chapter does not authoritatively finalize Job as a perfectly pious man. According to Bakhtin, the authoring of a character as a human being requires a dialogical interaction with other human beings who have an excess of seeing or surplus of seeing, because the excess of seeing by another human being complements a character as a whole human being.³⁵ However, in the prologue of *Job*, such excess or surplus of seeing by characters is missing, because the prologue does not yet provide Job our hero with enough space and time to interact dialogically with other human beings and their voices.

In the prologue, until Job's three friends are introduced, the human beings who interact directly in dialogue with Job are Job's messengers and his wife. These characters lack certain credentials to qualify as characters who can offer Job the surplus of seeing. First, Job's messengers and his wife do not bring a different point of view through which they can influence and persuade Job to evaluate himself. Job's messengers brought Job the news of the tragic events. It is highly possible that their messages might have conveyed some of their own worldview or interpretive elements,³⁶ but they were not strong enough to influence Job to call his self-understanding into question or to change his way of living and acting.³⁷ According to the narrator's voice (בכל זאת לא חטא איוב ולא נתן)

³³ Several scholars have attempted to answer the same question. Newsom (*The Book of Job*) looked at the answer through different genres and moral imaginations. Lo (*Job 28 as Rhetoric*) suggests that Job's character has changed. Some scholars explain the reason behind the two different voices by examining the effect of Job's wife on Job (Cf. Magdalene, "Job's Wife as Hero," 209–58).

³⁴ Both of Job's voices fail to completely define Job in *Job*. Instead of providing an adequate definition of Job, Job's two voices provoke Job's three friends' voices to interact with Job's voices and define Job in *Job*.

³⁵ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 22–23.

³⁶ I have already discussed the way the messengers delivered the tragic news with their own interpretation in chapter 2.

³⁷ Iben Damgaard ("My Dear Reader": Kierkegaard's Reader and Kierkegaard as a Reader of the Book of Job," in *Religion and Normativity: Receptions and Transformations of*

תפלה לאלהים), readers may perceive that Job has not changed his lifestyle but maintained it as it was, as introduced by the narrator in 1:1–5. In the same way, it is evident that Job's wife's voice was also ineffective in inducing Job to question his self-understanding in the prologue, because Job rebuffed his wife's voice and upheld his integrity in 2:10.

Second, Job's messengers and his wife failed to provide Job with a threshold for the new world into which Job was about to cross.³⁸ Job's encounters with his messengers and his wife were not extraordinary, since the messengers' and his wife's worlds were not different from Job's world in the prologue. Job's messengers' reports clearly communicated a change in Job's possessions but not a change in Job's lifestyle, especially his worldview. Ironically, their messages concerning the tragic events were used to confirm the narrator's voice concerning Job as a man of integrity in 1:1–5.

Further, Job's wife's utterance failed to introduce a new world to Job. In 2:9, Job's wife uttered "Do you still persist in your integrity? *brk* God and die," (עדך מחזיק בתמתך ברך אלהים ומת). Her utterance confirms exactly how Job has acted and what he has said and done thus far. Job continues to keep his integrity and to be a blameless man. Job has already mentioned the word "*brk*" in 1:21 just as his wife suggested in the middle sentence.³⁹ Also, just as the imperative verb "מת" (die) presupposes Job as a 'living' man, it is evident that Job has always perceived himself as a 'living' man, not a dead man. So, Job's messengers' and wife's utterances did not challenge Job to alter his actions, speech or lifestyle.

Besides Job's messengers and his wife, Job's three friends are introduced as other human beings in the last scene of the prologue (2:11–13). Unlike Job's messengers and his wife, Job's three friends play different roles.⁴⁰ They do have the surplus of seeing which could impact on Job to influence

the Bible, ed. Kirsten Nielsen [Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2009], 101) contends, "The art of being a good reader thus implies that the reader examines himself in the light of the text. The text calls the reader's self-understanding into question in order to transform his way of living and acting." According to Damgaard, Job was not a good reader, but Job's messengers, who observed the tragic events, were not good deliverers either, because they also failed to help Job to be a good reader.

³⁸ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 34.

³⁹ Regardless of Job's wife's implication and meaning when she uses the word "*brk*," since the word was used in a very ambiguous way, readers may notice that Job's wife suggestion to Job to "*brk*" God is meaningless, because Job had already used the word "*brk*" in the previous chapter.

⁴⁰ Mathewson (*Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 39) explains that 2:11–13 "seems to be distinct from the entire prologue altogether" and links the prologue and the dialogue/poetic section that follow as its main purpose.

him to question his self-understanding and to provide the threshold of a new world for Job.

Job's three friends' actions in 2:11–13 function to turn Job's eyes from his life to his death. Although Job's three friends do not utter a word according to 2:13, their actions impact on Job so that he can see what he has not seen previously: death (2:12).⁴¹ In his interaction with the two characters, his messengers and his wife, Job never saw or mentioned 'death.' In actuality, Job has never seen 'death,' only 'life.' Job never actually witnessed the death of his servants and his children. He only hears the news about 'death' from the 'living,' his fourth messenger.⁴² Also, Job only hears the word "die" (מת) from his 'living' wife.

In fact, Job himself never once mentions the word "death" (מות). After he received the fourth messenger's news regarding the "death" (מות) of his servants and children, in 1:21, Job spoke only of his mother's womb and returning "there" (שמה) rather than using the word "מות" (death).⁴³ As to Job's ambiguous utterance in 1:21, Mathewson contends that Job "effaces" all tragic realities

with the most genteel of all euphemisms, "I shall return there [to the womb of the mother/earth]"—even using a euphemism ("there") for a euphemism ("womb") of death.⁴⁴

In this way, according to Mathewson, Job resymbolizes death by identifying it as a natural part of the human lifecycle and as a part of God's protective care of giving and taking (1:21).⁴⁵

However, I propose a different reading of Job's utterance in 1:21. Rather than being a euphemistic expression for his death to Job, the utterance continues to corroborate Job's unaffected perception of his identity and

⁴¹ Job's three friends' acts are mourning rituals (Cf. Lohfink, "Enthielten die im Alten Testament bezeugten Klageriten eine Phase des Schweigens," 260–77; Pham, *Mourning in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible*, 29–31). Particularly, as we discussed above, by introducing Job's three friends and the silence between Job and his three friends, the narrator starts to penetrate into characters' voices and to let Job and other characters have surplus of seeing.

⁴² The text does not mention Job as being witness to his servants' and children's corpses. Previously in chapter 2, the book examined how Job believed what he heard rather than what he saw, concerning the news about his servants' and children's death, as reported by his fourth messenger.

⁴³ Mathewson (*Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 53–56) analyzes Job's utterance as the symbolisation of death. However, it is not clear in the text whether or not Job actually considered his 'death.'

⁴⁴ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54.

regular life within God's protective care. If the word "there" (שמה) in Job's voice does in fact indicate Job's euphemistic expression/resymbolization of his death resulting from his acknowledgment of his mortality, Job's utterance may easily evoke for readers God's proclamation to Adam and Eve after they ate the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil: "... for out of it you were taken; you are dust (עפר), and to dust (עפר) you shall return" (Gen. 3:19), since God's utterance signified the death of human beings. Likewise, Qohelet's teaching in the book of Ecclesiastes: "All go to one place; all are from the dust (עפר), and all turn to dust (עפר) again" (3:20) and "and the dust (עפר) returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it" (12:7), recognizes death as the fate of all human beings.

This recollection of God's voice in Gen. 3:19 and Qohelet's voice in Eccl. 3:20 and 12:7 may prompt readers to ask the following question. If Job wants to express his death in a euphemistic way, why did he not just say the word "dust" (עפר) instead of "womb" (בטן) or "there" (שמה)? Job did not say, "I came from the dust and to dust or there I shall return" but instead he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return there" (1:21). Is there a cogent explanation for why Job uses the words "womb" and "there" instead of the word "dust"?

Interestingly enough, when readers compare Job's mourning rituals for his servants and children in 1:20 with Job's three friends' mourning rituals in 2:12, it becomes apparent to readers that the word "dust" (עפר) appears not in Job's act but in the acts of his three friends. In 1:20, Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head and fell on the ground/earth (ארצה)⁴⁶ to worship God. In 2:12, his friends raised their voices, wept aloud, tore their robes and threw dust (עפר) in the air upon their heads.

Clines reads Job's three friends throwing "dust" as an act which is too ambiguous to interpret.⁴⁷ However, we can read the three friends' act of throwing "dust" on their heads to express their sympathy with Job as mourners as an act which identifies them as the dead,⁴⁸ because in the

⁴⁶ Job's act of falling down on the earth can be separated from his act of mourning for the dead. Job's act of falling down on the earth is an act of submission (Unterwerfung) and worship (Verehrung) to God rather than an act of mourning for the dead. (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 35; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 92) Therefore, the word "earth" in Job's act may evoke readers to read it as Job's 'living' life rather than his death (cf. Job 11:13–20).

⁴⁷ Clines, *Job* 1–20, 62–63.

⁴⁸ In Josh. 7:6, Joshua threw dust on his head to mourn for the defeat/death of the Israelites at the hands of the men of Ai. In Lam. 2:10, the elders threw dust on their heads

Hebrew Bible, the word “dust” is often identified with destruction,⁴⁹ the poor/misery⁵⁰ or death (mortality)⁵¹ to imply death. In identifying themselves as mourners as a way of expressing their sympathy for Job, the friends deliver their readings on Job in the prologue as an already-dead person.

However, and quite to the contrary, from the utterance in 1:21, it is highly conceivable that Job still views himself as being within God’s blessings, protective care and peace. According to 1:21, Job’s life technically circulates within God’s blessings. In the Hebrew Bible, the word “womb,” especially a womb bearing a son, is perceived as a token of God’s blessings and evidence of God’s care.⁵² By seeing himself within God’s blessings and protective care, Job still perceives himself as a man who has a close relationship with God.

Also, even when his wife used the word “die” (מת), Job ignored the word “מות” (death) and rejected his wife’s suggestion that he should die. In the prologue, the characters who employ the word “death” (מות) are Job’s fourth messenger in 1:19 and his wife in 2:9. The fourth messenger’s use of the word “death” (מות) conveyed the death of Job’s servants and children to him and Job’s wife’s use of the word “death” was rejected by Job. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that Job might have thought that death had nothing to do with him until his friends’ visit.

Ultimately, it is the actions of Job’s friends that deliver the message about Job’s own death. His friends’ actions connote Job as an already dead man.⁵³ Job begins to read his friends’ actions as their readings of Job as a dead man. By reading his friends’ readings and discovering that his friends have read what he had not read, Job is able to benefit from their ‘surplus of seeing’ and this could alter his understanding of his identity as a pious man. Job’s three friends in 2:11–13 provide Job with the opportunity to

to mourn for the destruction/death of Jerusalem. In Ezek. 27:30, people threw dust on their heads to mourn for the destruction/death of Tyre.

⁴⁹ Deut. 9:21; 2 Sam. 22:43; 2 Kgs 13:7; 2 Kgs 23:6, 15; 2 Chron. 34:4; Job 4:19; 10:9; 30:19; Pss. 7:5; 18:42; Isa. 5:24; 17:13; 29:5; Lam. 3:29.

⁵⁰ 1 Sam. 2:8; 2 Sam. 16:13; 1 Kgs 16:12; Job 16:15; 20:11; Ps. 113:7; Isa. 25:12; 26:5; 47:1; 52:2; Mic. 7:17.

⁵¹ Gen. 2:7; 3:10, 19; 18:27; Deut. 28:24; Josh. 7:6; Job 10:9; 17:16; 20:11; 21:26; 34:15; Pss. 22:15; 22:29; 30:9; 44:25; 90:3; 103:14; 104:29; 119:25; Eccl. 3:20; 12:7; Isa. 26:19; 29:4; 41:2; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 26:10; 27:30; Dan. 12:2; Amos 2:7; Mic. 1:10; Zeph. 1:17.

⁵² Gen. 30:2; Deut. 7:13; 28:4, 11, (cf. v.28); Pss. 22:9; 71:6; 127:3; Isa. 44:2, 24; 49:5; Jer. 1:5.

⁵³ Clines, *Job 1–21*, 61 and 63; Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 39; Lohfink, “Enthielten die im Alten Testament bezeugten Klageriten eine Phase des Schweigens,” 260–77; Pham, *Mourning in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible*, 29–31.

re-read his identity through the screen of his three friends' emotional-volitional reaction to Job's outward appearance. As Bakhtin claims:

For, from within myself, there is only my own inner affirmation of myself, which I am unable to project upon my outward expressedness (as detached from my inner self-sensation), and that is why it confronts me as axiologically empty, lacking any affirmed foundation. Something like a *transparent screen* has to be inserted between my inner self-sensation (the function of my *empty* seeing) and my outwardly expressed image: the screen of the other's possible emotional-volitional reaction to my outward manifestation—has possible enthusiasm, love, astonishment, or compassion for me. And looking through this screen of the other's soul (which is thus reduced to a means), I vivify my exterior and make it part of the plastic and pictorial world.⁵⁴

By looking through the screen of his friends' reactions to his outward appearance, Job can project his inner self onto his language. Readers can clearly recognize Job's manifestation of his inner self and life in his language in the poetic section. Eventually, Job's three friends' actions appear to Job as an excess/surplus of seeing and help Job to see his death which generates the dialogue from the prologue just as a flower unfolds into blossom according to Bakhtin: "The excess of my seeing is the bud in which slumbers form, and whence form unfolds like a blossom."⁵⁵

Job did not read death from any of the other characters' voices, but he did from his three friends' actions in the prologue. The ways in which Job and his three friends perceived death were different, however. While his three friends read Job's death as a result of Job's sins and God's punishment,⁵⁶ Job perceived his death as the only hope⁵⁷ to escape from his present chronotope and the only way to finalize himself in *Job*. In the following sections, we examine how the Job of the dialogue read each voice in the prologue through a transparent screen inserted into his three friends' reading of Job.

Job begins to read what he had not read previously from the narrator's voice in the prologue because of his reading of his friends' surplus of seeing his death. Job's act of reading his friends' excess in seeing his death induces Job to re-read his own interpretation of himself as a perfectly pious man. To readers, in *Job* 1:1, the narrator places a man in a particular

⁵⁴ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 31. The emphasis is added.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁶ We will examine how Job's three friends read the voices in the prologue through their understanding of Job's death in the section 'The Three Friends' Voices'.

⁵⁷ Job looks for death as hope as a way out of his suffering and hopes to have life in death/Sheol. Cf. Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 103–4.

geographical location “in the land of Uz” and names him as “Job.” By placing him in a particular place and giving him a specific name, the narrator implicitly seems to present Job as a man who has a unique voice and worldview⁵⁸ like those of an actual human being, because historical and social localization transforms a character into a human being.⁵⁹

The narrator’s implication invites readers to hear that it is Job’s voice that defines him as a pious man, not the narrator’s. In fact, as we have seen, the narrator’s voice provides a rather ambiguous definition of Job. In the prologue, the narrator leaves room for Job’s voice to reflect on his self-description in the dialogue. First, as mentioned above, the narrator himself never references Job’s death and indeed at the point of Job’s realization the narrator falls silent after chapter 2. The narrator is signaling that the next to speak is Job.⁶⁰ In so doing, the narrator opens the space and time for Job⁶¹ to speak out and to replace the void left by the narrator’s silence with his voices.

In what follows, we investigate how Job fills out the narrator’s voice by looking at the way that certain key words that appear in both the prologue and the dialogue are reworked by Job in his speeches.

Job’s Perfect Piety and Possessions in Job 1:1–3

Job 1:1–3, as argued previously, does not orientate readers and characters to Job’s finalised world but to the world of the prologue and acts as an *entrée* into the world in which readers and characters determine Job.⁶² Succinctly, the narrator’s voice in 1:1–3 acts as an authorial voice to form

⁵⁸ The unique temporal and spatial position of a speaker forms his/her unique point of view or worldview (Lahteenmaki, “On Meaning and Understanding,” 86).

⁵⁹ Cf. Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 30–31. Todorov (*Mikhail Bakhtin*, 30) states Bakhtin’s understanding of a human being as the following “If language is constitutively intersubjective (social), and if it is also essential to human existence, then the conclusion is escapable: human existence is originally social, and cannot be reduced to its biological dimension without being deprived of those characteristics that make it human . . .”

⁶⁰ The narrator’s voice functions as an introducer to the next speaker from chapter 3 to chapter 42:6. The narrator’s introduction of the next speaker is difficult to read as the utterance. The introductive voice plays its role as an indicator of the change of speaker for the sake of readers who read written words on paper. The narrator’s introductory voice at the beginning of chapter 3 may not be required if Job is acted on the stage, television, or radio, because the audience may easily figure out the change of speaker.

⁶¹ The narrator’s silence is also for three friends’ voices. We will examine three friends’ voices following Job’s voice.

⁶² Cf. Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 38.

Job the character in the prologue. The “authorial perspective” of the narrator is “transgredient” to that of Job,⁶³ since, in accordance with Bakhtin’s idea, as a character like other characters in *Job*, Job can neither live nor be guided by his own lived experiences and actions, for Job’s life and consciousness are descended or bestowed upon him from “the creative consciousness of an author.”⁶⁴

However, although the narrator’s voice in 1:1–3 exists as an authoritative voice for Job and there is a boundary between the narrator’s voice and Job’s voice, there is always the potential to break down that boundary to free Job’s voice from the narrator’s voice.⁶⁵ Although it may be impossible for readers to detect Job’s explicit breach of the narrator’s voice because there is no direct conversation between the narrator and Job, this of the narrator’s voice in 1:1–3 takes its form in his address to an “other.”⁶⁶ According to Hugh White’s idea, readers may envisage that Job is

not subtly determined in [his] character by the “transgredient” factors imposed upon him by [the narrator’s] authoritative [voice] but take shape in [his] open-ended discourse [or voice] with others which offers the possibility of escape from external determination.⁶⁷

While Job’s speech following the narrator’s authoritative voice—What if my children have sinned and *brk* God in their hearts?—is a soliloquy in the prologue, the utterance takes its form as one with addressees and is directed to its audiences such as the narrator,⁶⁸ Job himself,⁶⁹ the super-addressee, who is God, and readers⁷⁰ of *Job* because, consistent with

⁶³ Hugh C. White, “The Trace of the Author in the Text,” *Semeia* 71 (1995): 58.

⁶⁴ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 12; quoted in White, “The Trace of the Author in the Text,” 58.

⁶⁵ David McCracken (“Character in the Boundary: Bakhtin’s Interdividuality in Biblical Narratives,” *Semeia* 63 (1993): 36) comments, based upon a Bakhtinian idea, that Job the “character is relatively free and independent rather than closed, limited, and strictly defined from an objective authorial position. It is not finally a part of a system of structures, for there is something always unfinalizable in character; it is not reified, quantifiable, defined, or predetermined.”

⁶⁶ White, “The Trace of the Author in the Text,” 58.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁶⁸ The narrator’s utterance after Job’s speech in 1:5 “Thus, Job did all days” may be a responsive speech to Job’s utterance.

⁶⁹ Job may have addressed/directed this speech to himself.

⁷⁰ Job may have meant for the speech to be a soliloquy. However, the speech is directed to readers of *Job* regardless of Job’s intention, because Job’s speech in the prologue of *Job* is written for readers of *Job*.

Bakhtin's idea, Job's voice is "always a response, full of other voices, and itself anticipating another response."⁷¹

By giving the speech addressees, Job begins to make his voice heard as a resisting⁷² voice to readers as a way to free himself from the narrator's voice. Succinctly, Job's resisting voice helps readers to observe Job as a speaking person who brings his "own unique ideological discourse," his "own language," according to Bakhtin.⁷³ Job's act of bringing his own unique voice may signal an initiative on his part to engage in a dialogic interaction with others' voices. Job's initiative to interact dialogically with others signals a sense of his limits, because a dialogic relationship with an "awareness of the Other" is an indication of a sense of one's limits.⁷⁴

As readers read Job's sense of his own limitations, this may induce them to imagine Job's response to his perfect piety and possessions in the following way. Readers may see that Job actually reads the presentation of himself as a perfect, pious and righteous man as a limited statement about himself and the kind of man he is. Eventually, Job's recognition of this limited presentation of himself encourages him to open his mouth creatively to read other meanings from the definition of what kind of man he is in relation to his perfect character and possessions.

Readers may read Job's act of creative reading in order to glean other meanings from the definition of a man proportionate to his piety and possessions as Job's act of discovering hidden meanings from the words in 1:1–3 in order to resist the narrator's authorial voice concerning Job as a perfectly pious man in 1:1–3. Before examining what hidden meanings Job read from the definition of him as a man with perfect piety and righteousness in 1:1–3, we must first answer the question, 'How does Job come to know that there is a hidden meaning in the definition of him as a man relative to the perfectly pious and righteous image in 1:1–3?'

In the prologue, especially 1:1–5, 13,⁷⁵ 20, 22 and 2.8, 10b, the narrator accounts for Job's actions, which involves reflecting on his righteousness,

⁷¹ McCracken, "Character in the Boundary," 35; McCracken borrowed the idea from Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 332.

⁷² White ("The Trace of the Author in the Text," 60) contends, "... the voice of the character resists the enclosing framework of the narrator, so the narrative text as a whole resists the enclosing framework of an interpreter."

⁷³ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, 332; Emerson, "The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin," in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, ed. Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1989), 157.

⁷⁴ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 144; White, "The Trace of the Author in the Text," 58.

⁷⁵ Verse 13 describes Job's children's actions rather than Job's, but as I explained in chapter 2, the verse presupposes Job's actions as the father of the house. As the father of

his relationship to his children as a father, and his response to skin disease. Job's actions in the prologue spoken by the narrator reveal nothing about Job to readers. Job's actions themselves tell us nothing about Job the performer. They only tell readers about the objective state of affairs in which they are performed and are generated axiologically only by this state of affairs, and not by Job our hero.⁷⁶ Therefore, in the statement of Job's actions, the narrator's voice induces readers to acknowledge that the narrator is not presenting Job himself but only his actions in 1:1–3 and *Job* 1:1–3 is not his voice but the narrator's. Further, readers realize that although *Job* 1:1–3 is heard as the narrator's voice, Job the character described by the narrator's voice exists as a character that has a voice with which to speak. This awareness provokes readers to heed Job's own voice rather than the narrator's voice. Readers expect to hear Job's own voice informing them of something that the narrator did not state about Job, because Job the character must have a different voice from that of the narrator, according to a Bakhtinian reading.⁷⁷ Hence, readers may read that Job perceives his voice as being concealed in the narrator's voice.

Job's voice with respect to *Job* 1:1–3 is Job's acknowledgement that his existence depends on others.⁷⁸ According to Bakhtin, one is unable to read oneself to understand or define oneself unless he or she recognizes and understands others.⁷⁹ Just as Job perceived his death through his friends, Job realizes that he needs to read himself through others. The words "blameless" (תם), "upright" (ישר), "fearing God" (אלהים ירא), "turning away from evil" (וסר מרע) are derived from others rather than Job himself. In the prologue, since the narrator presents Job as blameless, upright, one who fears God and turns away from evil, readers assume that Job is blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. Due to this assumption, readers believe that Job's three friends treat Job as a perfectly

his house, Job may be responsible for providing food to eat and drink and a house to hold a banquet in.

⁷⁶ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 140.

⁷⁷ Please refer to sections *The Narrator's Voice* and *Job's Voice* in chapter 2 for more information about the different voices between the narrator and Job.

⁷⁸ Bakhtin (*Art and Answerability*, 154) contends, "I come to know a considerable portion of my own biography from what is said by others, by people close to me, as well as in the emotional tonality of these others: my birth and my descent, the events of family life . . . come to know all of them from the lips of others who are its heroes."

⁷⁹ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 106–10; Mathew Roberts, "Poetics Hermeneutics Dialogics: Bakhtin and Paul de Man," in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, ed. Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989), 122; cf. White, "The Trace of the Author in the Text," 56.

pious man (4:2–6) and Job himself perceives that he is a pious and righteous man (cf. Job 9:21–22; 12:4; 27:5; 31:6; 32:1).

Clearly, Job's realization of his need for otherness for his existence is displayed by Job's voices in the dialogue. Job acknowledges his mother's womb, knees and breasts (3:10–12) as essential elements for him to exist and defines himself as a human being who has a brief and insubstantial life (7:7, 9, 16; 14:2). In the dialogue, the use of the words mother's womb, knees and breasts implies that Job's being is contingent on another being, who is his mother, in this case. Without his mother's womb, knees and breasts, Job would never have existed. Therefore, in chapter 3, Job's act of cursing the womb, knees and breasts signifies his intention to erase his relationship to others. Job's intention to destroy his relationship to others conveys two messages to readers of *Job*.

First, by destroying his relationship with others, Job implies that his place in the present chronotope is a place where there is no peace and harmony, since his three friends have manifested their hostilities toward him by giving up on their friendship and faithfulness (6:14–27). As his very being is contingent on others, Job intends to eradicate his being from his present chronotope by destroying his relationship with his friends. Readers of *Job* may read Job's intention as his desire to break the polyphonic author's authoritative relationship to him. Job does not want to be written as the polyphonic author writes him in *Job*. Job does not want to be written as a character that is suffering for no reason and to no end. Job intends to free himself and escape from the polyphonic author's pen.⁸⁰

Second, by deconstructing his relationship with others, Job wants his existence to cease. By cursing his birthday, the womb, knees and breasts in chapter 3, he is looking for death. By looking for death, Job wants to end his life in *Job*. In other words, by acknowledging death through his friends' eyes, Job perceives the way to finalize himself in *Job* through death. In so doing, he wishes to culminate *Job* by seeking his non-existence in chapter 3.

Why does Job look for death to finalize himself in chapter 3 of *Job*? By dint of his seeing death, Job recognizes the gap left by the narrator's voice in the prologue. As we discussed, there is no death in the narrator's

⁸⁰ This is only a metaphorical expression and does not necessarily provide any information concerning its source. At the same time, it is possible that Job's moral imagination to escape from the polyphonic author's pen can remind readers of his act of escaping from the narrator's voice as we discussed on pages 183–184.

voice even though he or she introduces Job as “whole” (תם) (as death completes a lifecycle) “the key *Leitwort* that underscores Job’s most distinctive character . . . with its cognate term ‘integrity/blamelessness’ (תָּמַם)” and “integrity reflects the wholeness or coherence of character.”⁸¹ For Job, the absence of death in the narrator’s voice means the continuation of his chronotopic situation in which there is no death but only suffering. Primarily, Job views his suffering as inexplicable and incessant. By hearing Job’s voice’s reading of “the days” (הַיָּמִים) and “the day” (הַיּוֹם), readers may find an explanation for Job’s outlook and may detect how the meanings of these words in the prologue have been expanded and renewed in the dialogue.

Job’s concept of death in his life and acknowledgement of the absence of death in the narrator’s voice both have an effect on his view of the words “the days” and “the day” in the prologue. The word “the days” (הַיָּמִים) in 1:5 symbolizes Job’s regular life. According to 1:1–5, Job’s life seems to go round in an endless circle of regularity. Also, the word “the day” (הַיּוֹם) in 1:6, 13; 2:1 is used to interrupt Job’s regularity and signal Job at the threshold of suffering. In the prologue, before seeing his death, Job may have considered “the day” as one of “the days” that constituted his regular cycle, even though “the day” actually interrupted this regularity. Since he perceives “the day” as one of his “(the) days,” Job assumes that this regularity continues to exist. This assumption makes Job confess his lifecycle and God’s regular give-and-take cycle as his regular life and fate in 1:21 and 2:10. Thus, “the day” in the prologue does not surprise him at all in the prologue.

However, after looking at his death through his friends’ surplus of seeing his death, Job uncovers different meanings that had been hidden in the words “the days” and “the day” until then. The words “the days” and “the day” denote Job’s endless circle of suffering rather than his regular cycle. Hence, Job may perceive the words ‘the days’ and ‘the day’ in the dialogue as words delivering the message that Job’s life is caught in endless suffering.

As “the day” is perceived as “a never-ending pattern of successive cycles”⁸² in which Job is manacled to suffering, “the day” formulates Job’s

⁸¹ Lo, *Job* 28, 42–43.

⁸² Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken What is Right about Me*, 92. Also, please see Rolf Knierim, *The Task of Old Testament Theology: Method and Case* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 171–224 for more discussion on cyclical comic patterns.

new chronotope in Job 7:1,6, 16; 10:20. According to 7:1,6, 16; 10:20, Job's chronotope in the dialogue presents his life like that of a worker who carries out hard work without wages and cannot wait to finish. "The day" in the dialogue is time that prevents Job from rest, hope and even death rather than that which frees Job from his suffering.

Such a reading of "the days" and "the day" causes Job to read the day of his birth as the day that marked the beginning of his suffering. As a result, by cursing the day of his birth, Job wants to destroy the day of his birth and make "his day" disappear from the calendar of his life (3:4). By making it disappear, he is wishing that "the days" and "the day" never existed. Then, the interruption to his all days that constitute his regularity in 1:6, 13; 2:1 would never have happened. If there were to have been no interruption to his all days in 1:6, 13 and 2:1, then he would never have had to undergo the destruction to his regular lifestyle.

Specifically, Job chooses to curse the day, night, light and darkness of his conception and birth and his mother's womb, knees and breasts as a mode to cease his suffering in chapter 3. He never curses his present day, night, light or darkness nor declares any suicidal words in chapter 3. He may have acknowledged that a suicidal speech would be in vain, because his children and servants had already died and his other possessions had already been destroyed. To Job, the only logical way to prevent his possessions from destruction and children and servants from death is to erase his existence. If he had died in his mother's womb or died in infancy, he would never have become rich, married or had ten children. In chapter 3, Job reads his death in infancy as a way to prevent his possessions, servants and children from deadly destruction or death. If he had never existed, the tragic events would have never come to pass.

Dust (עפר)

The word "dust" in 2:12 plays a significant role for Job's voice. By looking at "dust" in his three friends' act in 2:12, Job discovers his death and his voice from chapters 3 to 10 seeks death. The word "dust" also appears in Job's voice as an important word in the dialogue. Using the word "dust," Job clearly describes his present status. In effect, the word 'dust' in Job's voice in the dialogue reveals Job's reading of 'dust' in his friends' act in 2:12.

In *Job* 7:5, Job states, “My flesh is clothed with worms⁸³ and clods⁸⁴ of dust; my skin hardens,⁸⁵ then breaks out/oozes⁸⁶ again” (לבש בשרי רמה) וגיש (וגוש) עפר עורי רגע וימאס. In *Job* 7:21, Job complains,

Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I shall lie in the dust; you will seek me, but I shall not be.

In *Job* 10:9, Job again cries out, “Remember that you fashioned me like clay; and will you turn me to dust again?” In all three verses, Job presents his status as disintegration, stasis, and separation.⁸⁷

Job 7:5 implies Job’s disintegration by using the word “dust.” Since his skin is covered by clods of dust and worms, his skin hardens and breaks out. In *Job* 7:21, Job reflects his static status. Metaphorically speaking, since Job is trussed in the dust, even God cannot seek him. Job has no way out. He has to remain static with his troubles. Lastly, in *Job* 10:9, Job confesses that God is separating him from His relationship. By returning Job to dust, God is abandoning His relationship with Job.

For readers, God’s act of returning Job to dust may imply His act of taking away His breath/spirit (רוח) and image (צלם) from Job. In Gen. 1:26–27 and 2:7, readers read that God made the first human beings out of dust (עפר) according to His image (צלם) by giving them the breath of life

⁸³ Almost all scholars translate the word רמה as ‘worm(s)’ (see also 17:14; 21:26; 24:20; 25:6), but some scholars translate the word as ‘be sluggish, become putrid, corrupt’ by relating it to its cognate in Arabic *ramaya*, which means ‘sluggish, become putrid, or corrupt’. Both the LXX and Jerome seem to translate the word רמה twice to preserve both meanings: ἐν σαπρίδι σαωλῆσας and *putredine vermium* (“in corruption of worms”). Cf. Clines, *Job* 1–20, 163; Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 76.

⁸⁴ The word גיש is a *hapax* of גוש (‘clod’), which might have a medical sense of ‘pustules or ‘scabs’. In the construct relationship with עפר, the phrase עפר (וגוש) גיש means ‘clods of dust’ or metaphorically ‘dirty scabs’, which is suggested by Dhorme, *Job*, 99–100. However, others may take it as a gloss on גיש and translate the phrase as ‘scab’ (Clines, *Job* 1–20, 163; Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, 163).

⁸⁵ BDB (921) suggests the meaning of the verb רגע as ‘hardens’, cognate with Ethiopic *raga’a* (‘coagulate’ or ‘congeal’, cf. Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob*, p. 163) and provides *Job* 7:5 as an example. However, some scholars translate the verb as ‘crack’ by noting the parallelism between רגע and מחץ in 26:12 (cf. Dhorme, *Job*, 100). Clines (*Job* 1–20, 163) appears to be inclined to the meaning provided by BDB.

⁸⁶ The verb מאס is taken as a ‘by-form’ (Habel, *Job*, 153), ‘metaplastic form’ (Gordis, *Job*, 80), or ‘secondary form’ (BDB, 549) of מסס, which means ‘flow’, ‘run’ or ‘drip’ in the niphel. A. Guillaume (*Studies in the Book of Job*, ed. John MacDonald. Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society Supplement 2 [Leiden: Brill, 1968], 86) argues that the verb comes from the Arabic cognate *masa* and translates ‘(the wound) widened’ or ‘opened up again’: quoted in Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 77.

⁸⁷ The words ‘Disintegration’, ‘Stasis’, and ‘Separation’ are borrowed from Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 95–100. In the book, Mathewson explains God’s hostile act toward Job under each subheading: Separation, Disintegration, and Stasis.

(נשמת חיים). Also, in Eccl. 11:5 and 12:7, readers can find that the wisdom tradition retains the position that human life is formed by receiving the spirit (הרוח) from God, and a human being's death is like returning to the dust (העפר) of the earth and giving the spirit/breath (הרוח) back to God from whom it originated. Therefore, in Job's voice, readers read that Job read God's act of returning him to dust as separating Job from God by taking away what He has given him as a human being; His spirit (רוח) and image. Consequently, these readings on "dust" lead Job to look for death and put hope in death for the attainment of peace, tranquility and rest (3:13–19).

Job's Voice in the Prologue and in the Dialogue

Job's voice in the dialogue is necessary to complement Job's voice in the prologue. Job's voice in the prologue was inadequate to provide Job with a self-definition, because it lacks interactions with others who can provide him with a surplus of seeing. To vivify himself and give form to himself as a whole, Job needs to project himself into another possible being and voice.⁸⁸ As another being and voice, Job and his voice attempt to evaluate Job himself as a complete man in *Job*. Therefore, Job's voice in the dialogue is presented as a different voice to the one in the prologue. Job's voice in the dialogue as a different voice to the voice of Job in the prologue and in the position of otherness,⁸⁹ creatively discovers different meanings, which were hidden in the prologue.

Sin (חטא)

Job's statement "it may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts" in 1:5 verbalizes Job's anxiety about the possibility that his

⁸⁸ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 17, 32–33.

⁸⁹ We can find the principle for the sentence from Bakhtin's idea on authoring. According to Bakhtin (*Art and Answerability*, 15–22), otherness is a necessary element for the authoring of oneself. Therefore, particularly in the autobiographical text the author must alienate from the hero to authorise his or her hero, which is him- or herself. Barbara Green (*Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship*, 33) adopts Bakhtin's outsideness (exotopy), which is the major characteristic of the relationship with another, as the fulcrum for all authorings. Also, Sung Uk Lim ("Jonah's Transformation and Transformation of Jonah from the Bakhtinian Perspective of Authoring and Re-authoring," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 33 (2008): 247) clearly mentions in his article, "Authoring is founded on the distinction between self and the other. This is applicable even in the relationship between us and our selves."

children may have sinned in their hearts. However, in Job 7:20 and 10:14, Job expresses *his* potential sins saying “If⁹⁰ I sin, what do I do to you . . .” (חטאתי מה אפעל לך) and “If I sin, you watch me and do not acquit me of my iniquity” (אם-חטאתי ושמרתני ומעוני לא תנקני). Prior to recognizing his friends’ surplus of seeing his death, Job could only see his children’s potential sins, but after observing his death through his friends’ eyes, Job begins to recognize his own potential sin. In other words, Job may realize that his anxious utterance about his children’s potential sins becomes an utterance that declares his own potential sin. Thus, Job’s discovery of his potential sin induces Job to perceive his suffering as the result of God’s act designed to torture or persecute Job in order to get Job to confess his potential sin.⁹¹

However, Job does not invent this meaning for the word rather he discovers it already in the word by an act of creative reading. As we argued in chapters 2 and 4 of this book, Job’s utterance of the word “sin” (חטא) in 1:5 implied Job’s anxiety, which demarcates him as a potential sinner. Though readers had already perceived Job’s potential sin from reading 1:5, Job failed to uncover this meaning in the prologue. It is only by dint of his friends’ seeing his death that Job is able to read his potential sin from the word “sin.”

The Womb (בטן)

Job mentions the word “womb” (בטן) in 1:21. In Job’s voice, the word “the womb” in the prologue was not just a place where all human beings begin their life to Job, but it meant the first and opening place for entering his world. Specifically, the womb led Job to read his life of regularity, perfect piety and possessions. Based upon the reading of the word, by confessing “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there [my mother’s womb],” Job implicitly expressed the thought that he would return to that place, “womb,” to reenter his life, so that he may reclaim his life of regularity, perfect piety and possessions.

⁹⁰ The verb is understood to convey a complete conditional phrase translated as ‘If I sin’ (GKC, #159hh). Clines (*Job 1–20*, p. 193) states this to be an implied hypothesis and states that “it is not grammatically necessary to supply the ‘if,’ but it is perfectly legitimate.” Cf. Num. 12:14; Prov. 18:22; Job 4:2, 21.

⁹¹ We have discussed Job’s perception of God as a torturer or persecutor who wants to hear the voice of the one being tortured giving the torturer’s point of view instead of their point of view in chapter 3 (section *Job’s Language and His Relationship with God*) of the book.

However, in the dialogue Job continued to read it to mean as it had meant in the prologue but also in its extra meaning of being the first and opening place to enter his world. However, this reading led Job to a different meaning than it did in the prologue. Since the “womb” denotes the place where all human beings begin their life, it is evident from his confession in 1:21 that Job considers himself a human being. As a human being, Job admits that he needs death from reading his friends’ readings on his death. Instead of finding death, Job is encountering a world where there is endless suffering. According to Job’s reading in the dialogue, the word “womb” delivers the meaning to Job that his mother’s womb is the passageway for entering his world of endless suffering.⁹² Succinctly, the word “womb” in the dialogue means perfect suffering, the disorder of his life without death and a cycle of endless suffering. Consequently, Job’s reading of the word “womb” in the dialogue leads him to curse his mother’s womb in an attempt to erase his present chronotope.

Give (נתן)

The verb “give” (נתן) clearly indicates Job’s view of his relationship to God. In 1:21, Job confessed that his possessions and children had been given by God and they had been taken by God. From the voice, readers may grasp Job’s perception of the relationship between God and himself. This perception is evidenced in Job’s voice in the dialogue. In 6:8, Job requests God to give him death. Even death must be given by God. According to this voice, readers may acknowledge that Job’s whole being depends on God. Just as Job’s recognition of death came from others who were his friends, Job needs to receive death from another being who is God. Job sees death as his only hope in the present situation in order to cease his suffering. Since only God can give death, Job needs to request it from God in order to bring an end to his suffering.

However, in the dialogue, God does not give death to Job according to Job’s perception. Job confesses that God does not give and return his spirit but fills him with bitterness in 9:18 (לא-יתנני השב רוחי כי ישבעני ממררים), since God fills Job with terrors and lets Job’s spirit drink the poison of God’s arrows (כי חצי שדי עמדי-אשר חמתם שתי רוחי בעותי אלוה יערכוני: 6:4). Job realizes that God refuses to grant him death.

⁹² Pyeon (*You Have Not Spoken What Is Right about Me*, 76) understands that the door of the womb has not been closed. Job entered into a world of misery and trouble.

Return (שוב)

In the prologue, Job's voice reflects his idea about the order of the world, since there is a time to be given and a time to be taken away and also a time to be given good and a time for good to be taken away. Hence, Job anticipates his time to return to death in the dialogue. Thus, the verb "return" (שוב) in 1:21 enunciates that Job has hope in the future. As he came from his mother's womb, he expects to return there. Particularly, in the dialogue, Job may expect to return to death. By returning to death, Job has hope of ceasing his suffering and attaining harmony, peace, rest and tranquility (3:17–18).

Unfortunately, the anticipated time and place never come to Job. Or rather according to Job's perception, God did not allow Job to return to death. Once he acknowledges that there is no returning to death in his present life, Job transforms the positive verb "return" (שוב) illuminating hope in the future into a negative verb (שוב + לא) adumbrating a hopeless future in the dialogue (*Job* 7:7, 10; 9: 12, 13, 18; 10:(9, 16),⁹³ 21).

In the dialogue, Job acknowledges that God does not allow him to return to "there" (i.e. to death) and there is no way to death. So, Job's voice in the dialogue searches for death. For Job in the estranged chronotope, searching for death is the proper way to read his voice in the prologue, because returning to death is the natural order of his life.

God's Voice and Hassatan's Voice in Job's Voice in the Dialogue

In the prologue, God's voice and *hassatan's* voice cannot be read/ heard by Job the character because of Job's chronotopic limitations. The chronotope of the prologue presents Job's temporal and spatial limits which prevent him from accessing the heavenly scene to hear the voices of God and *hassatan*. This chronotopic presentation in the prologue also makes it difficult for readers to read Job's *reading* of God's and *hassatan's* voices. However, it is possible for readers to hear the sound of God's and *hassatan's* voices echoing in Job's voice in the dialogue. Since, according to Bakhtin,

⁹³ In *Job* 10:9 and 16 the verb 'return' (שוב) is not a negative but a positive verb. However, the meaning of returning implies Job's suffering without completion as a human being in *Job* 10:9 and 16.

there is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context. . . . Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all)

but “they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue,”⁹⁴ readers may read that the meanings of God’s voice and *hassatan*’s voice in the prologue never vanish but rather change to generate renewed meanings in Job’s voice.

God’s Voice

God’s voice in the prologue may be heard as an authoritative voice attempting to finalize Job to readers. In contrast, in Job’s voice in the dialogue, God’s voice echoes as an authoritative voice attempting to *unfinalize* Job. By hearing God’s voice echoing in Job’s voice in the dialogue, readers may perceive Job’s perspicacity in relation to God.

Heart (לב)

In *Job* 1:8 and 2:3, God asked *hassatan* whether or not he “put his heart on” Job. However, in *Job* 7:17, Job states that the one who puts his heart on man is God (מה-אנוש כי תגדלנו וכי-תשית אליו לבך). Through Job’s voice, readers may read the implication in God’s voice in *Job* 1:8 and 2:3. God’s speech in the prologue reflected what God thought of Job, using the phrase “you set your heart on him” (תשית אליו לבך).⁹⁵ Why does God put his heart on a man whose name is Job? Job explains the reason in the following verse. The reason is to visit and test a man (ותפקדנו לבקרים) (לרגעים תבחנונו). According to Job’s voice, God’s voice in the prologue may display God’s intention to test Job’s integrity. Job states repeatedly in 9:4 and 10:13 that he knows God’s heart that tests Job to search out his faults and probe after his sin, though God’s voice in 1:8 and 2:3 was ambiguous as to whether or not He already knew *hassatan*’s heart. God is the one that wants to search out Job’s potential sin. Therefore, God’s voice in the prologue reads Job as an unfinalized being to be investigated rather than as a finalized being.

Actually, God’s wish to discover whether or not Job is blameless (תם) when He agreed with *hassatan*’s suggestion in 1:12 and 2:6 to test Job was

⁹⁴ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 170.

⁹⁵ The translation is mine.

hidden from Job. God's intention to leave Job unfinalized is clearly demonstrated in Job 2:6 when God commands *hassatan* to spare Job's *nefesh* in order to continue the unfinished game between God and *hassatan* regarding Job.

Without Reason (חנם)

God's authorization to destroy Job without reason in 2:3 is clearly echoed in Job's voice in 9:17: "For he crushes me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds without cause" (חנם). God's voice echoing in Job's voice evinces that Job speaks what is right about God (cf. *Job* 42:8). Job may perceive God's crushing him without reason as God's act of concealing Job's way, particularly the way to death. As Yohan Pyeon mentions,

... Job 3.23 is the crux of the passage because it explicitly indicates the basis of Job's complaint: not the suffering, nor the bitterness of life as such but the misery of meaninglessness. This is expressed in two ways: "to the mighty man whose way is hidden," and "it is God who hides it." Here, obscuring the way of life is described as a "hedge"⁹⁶ (יִסָּד),⁹⁷

Job's suffering is not his physical pain nor his loss of possessions, servants and children, but God's act of hiding Job's way and hiding himself from Job by being silent to Job's question: Why does God make Job suffer without reason? Consequently, for Job, his discovery of hidden meanings in the words in the prologue allows him to see that his way is hidden and God, who has hidden his way, hides himself from Job. This realization leads Job to see his life as meaningless⁹⁸ which in turn, causes Job to see his suffering as pointless.

Hassatan's Voice

Hedge in (שֹׁכֵת)

In 1:10, *hassatan* challenged God on the basis that Job only fears God because God has put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has. *Hassatan* used the word "hedge" to imply God's protection of Job. However, Job confesses that God's protection (hedge: שֹׁכֵת) has become God's hiding (hedge: יִסָּד) his way. Interestingly, the Hebrew word

⁹⁶ The word "hedge" will be examined in more detail below.

⁹⁷ Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken What Is Right about Me*, 82.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 127.

for “hedge in” in *hassatan*’s voice differs from the Hebrew word for “hedge in” in Job’s voice. *Hassatan* uses the word “שָׁכַת” to mean “hedge in” in 1:10, but Job uses the word “יָסַד” to mean “hedge in” in 3:23. The word “שָׁכַת” in *hassatan*’s mouth comes from the verb “סָכַךְ/שָׁכַךְ,” but the word “יָסַד” in Job’s mouth comes from the verb “שָׁן/סָן.”⁹⁹

Job’s use of the verb “סָן” rather than the verb “שָׁכַךְ” in 3:23 reflects Job’s different reading of the word “שָׁכַת” in *hassatan*’s voice. Although *hassatan* meant God’s protection by the verb “שָׁכַת,” Job read it to mean God concealing his way. Such reading may have led Job to use the verb “יָסַד” in lieu of “שָׁכַת” to connote the meaning ‘to hide.’

Job’s reading of the verb “שָׁכַת” to mean ‘hide’ rather than ‘protection’ can be highlighted by Hos. 2:8. In Hos. 2:8, God proclaims that He would hedge up (שָׁךְ) Israel’s way in order that she may not find her paths as a result of her unfaithfulness. By referring to the verb used in Hos. 2:8, readers may come to understand Job’s reading of the verb “שָׁכַת.” Job’s voice in 3:23 echoes *hassatan*’s voice in 1:10 but in so doing, changes the meaning. Due to his perception of death, Job changes God’s act of hedging from protection to prevention. For Job, God’s protection once regarded as a blessing in the prologue becomes God’s prevention now deemed as a curse in the dialogue. Eventually, Job’s perception of God’s blessing becoming a curse causes him to curse the knees.

Blessings (ברכים) and Knees (ברכים)

In 1:10, *hassatan* continues to challenge God by stating that since God has blessed (ברַכַּת) Job, Job fears God. From *hassatan*’s challenge came Job’s suffering. God’s blessings such as a perfect number of sons and daughters and possessions eventually become a curse to Job. In the dialogue, Job reads that his suffering has begun with the tragic loss of all his possessions and children and the heartbreaking experience of receiving news

⁹⁹ Mathewson (*Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 74) argues that *HALOT* and *BDB* do not agree regarding the verb and *HALOT* suggests the roots of the verbs יָסַךְ and שָׁכַת derive from the same root by proposing that the roots שָׁן and שָׁכַךְ are by-forms. Having said that, he adopts the suggestion in *HALOT*, and takes the verb יָסַךְ as having the same root as the verb שָׁכַת. However, *BDB* advocates that the roots יָסַךְ and שָׁכַת are different and deliver different implications. The root שָׁכַךְ appears to imply ‘to protect’ (e.g. Exod. 33:22; Job 1:10; Isa. 5:5; *BDB*, 968). The root סָן seems to imply ‘to lock up, close up, shut in’ (e.g. Job 3:23; 38:8; Hos. 2:8; *BDB*, 692). I am predisposed to *BDB*, because the perception of the different roots for the two verbs fits ideologically into the idea of Job’s different reading of the verb in *hassatan*’s use of the verb (שָׁכַת).

of such catastrophic events through his servants/messengers.¹⁰⁰ If there had been no blessings in the first place, then Job would never have had to undergo such suffering. For this reason, Job regrets his parents' knees (ברכים) receiving him in 3:12.

In *Job* 1:1–3, his parents' knees (ברכים) were blessings (ברכים: cf. 2 Sam. 2:5) to Job. Since it would have been impossible for Job to experience the axiological picture of the world presented in *Job* 1:1–3 in which Job used to live, his parents' knees (ברכים) made it possible for Job to exist and experience that which *Job* 1:1–3 presented. In order to have the experience, Job must project himself into the life of others, particularly his parents, for whom Job's birth marked a significant event.¹⁰¹

It is also because of his parents' knees that Job must experience suffering. His parents' knees which enabled Job to live and experience God's blessings now lead him to live in and experience his way hidden by the hidden God. Therefore, after seeing his death, Job may have read that the words "blessings" (ברכים) in the prologue and "knees" (ברכים) have turned into suffering for him. For this reason, Job wishes that his parents' knees (ברכים) had never received him in order that he could experience blessings (ברכים).

Job's Three Friends' Voices

Besides Job's own voice, Job's three friends' voices attempt to provide a full definition of Job as an unrighteous man to Job himself by responding to Job's voices. Job's three friends' voices in response to Job in effect reflect the dialogical interrelationship with the voices in the prologue to readers. In what follows, we examine how Job's three friends' voices in the dialogue interact dialogically with the voices in the prologue.

Job's three friends' voices respond to Job's voice in the dialogue section. In order to respond to Job's voice, Job's three friends' voices rely on the words in the prologue. By echoing the words in the prologue, Job's three friends' speeches also have dialogical relationships to Job's voice in the dialogue. The following sections show how Job's three friends expand, renew and change the meanings of the key words that are dependent on the prologue in the way they respond to Job's voice which has already expanded, renewed and changed the voices in the prologue in the dialogue.

¹⁰⁰ As I discussed in chapter 2, Job did not witness the tragic events but received news of the events from four messengers who were his servants.

¹⁰¹ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 104.

*The Narrator's Voice and Eliphaz' Voice**Job's Integrity*

In 4:6, Eliphaz tries to remind Job of his integrity as a means to help him overcome his suffering. Actually, Eliphaz' utterances in 4:6 repeat the words "תם" and "ירא" which described Job's integrity in 1:1. By repeating the words describing Job's pious character, Eliphaz encourages Job to have strength and hope. In the dialogue, Eliphaz' repetition of the words "תם" and "ירא" used in the narrator's voice encourages readers to read that Eliphaz shares the same ideological perception of Job as that described in the prologue. Eliphaz carries this perception of Job in the dialogue. Eliphaz' idea of Job's pious character influences his response to Job in chapters 4 and 5. In chapters 4 and 5, because of his ideological understanding of Job's identity as a pious person, Eliphaz holds on to his belief that God will restore Job, since God never causes the innocent and upright to perish but delivers them from evil (4:7; 5:15–26).¹⁰²

Consequently, unlike Job, Eliphaz read the words "תם" and "ירא" as certainty of hope and restoration for Job. By introducing his own reading of the words to Job, Eliphaz intends to be an other to Job enabling him to see a brighter future. By being an other to Job, Eliphaz may think that his words effectively deliver a clear and adequate definition of Job as a pious sufferer¹⁰³ to Job himself and to readers of *Job*.

Dust (עפר)

The word "dust" (עפר) is used to depict Job's three friends' actions, which involved throwing dust in the air upon their heads after seeing Job from a distance and not recognizing him in 2:12. By throwing dust on their heads, Job's friends tried to identify themselves with Job. If Job read his friends' act of throwing dust in the air as an indication of Job's death, Eliphaz read it as an indication of the frailty of human beings and their vulnerability to being destroyed.

¹⁰² Please see Eliphaz' Voice in chapter 4 of this book for more discussion on Eliphaz' ideological perception of Job's piety.

¹⁰³ Eliphaz' perception of Job as a pious sufferer has been discussed in section 'Eliphaz and Job's Identity.'

In 4:19, Eliphaz defines human beings as those who live in houses of clay whose foundation is in the dust (בְּתִי-חֹמֶר אֶשֶׁר-בְּעֹפֶר יִסֻּדִם). In the following verse (4:20), Eliphaz explains how easily human beings can be destroyed or perish: “Between morning and evening they are destroyed; they perish forever without any regarding it.” Why does Eliphaz perceive human beings as vulnerable to destruction? Eliphaz’ next use of the word “dust” provides an answer.

In 5:6–7, Eliphaz uses the word “dust” to highlight that trouble is innate in human beings. In his utterance, Eliphaz points out to Job that “dust” metaphorically represents human beings’ sorrow and misery/trouble, since human beings are born to trouble and live in clay houses whose foundation is dust (4:19). According to Eliphaz, since human beings are born to trouble, and trouble (עֹמֶל) comes “as a consequence of sin,”¹⁰⁴ human beings are born to sin. Because human beings are born to sin, what they sow is sin and iniquity and what they reap is sorrow and misery (4:8).

Thus, Job as a human being was born to sin. As such, the suffering that Job is going through now is the result of his sin. In this way, Eliphaz seeks to deliver the message to Job that his suffering is a natural phenomenon for a human being.

Job’s Voice and Eliphaz’ Voice

1:21

In 1:21, Job confessed, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb; Naked shall I return to there. The Lord gives and the Lord takes.” The utterance is echoed in 4:3–4. The same words from the utterance are not repeated but Job’s implication in 1:21 is apparent in 4:3–4. 4:3–4 is Eliphaz’ statement of the deeds that Job used to carry out in the prologue, before the suffering came. What of Job’s implication is repeated in 4:3–4? In 1:21, Job implicitly confessed that the God he knows is the God who will restore him to the original place. By returning “there,” which is a euphemism for his mother’s womb,¹⁰⁵ Job expresses his hope to be restored to his original time, place and position as described in 1.1–3, because returning to his mother’s womb presupposes Job’s birth, particularly Job’s birth to be that of the greatest man of the East in 1:1–3. Eliphaz may share the same worldview

¹⁰⁴ Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken What Is Not Right about Me*, 107.

¹⁰⁵ Mathewson, *Death and Survival in the Book of Job*, 53.

as Job. By recalling for Job what he had done in the past in 4:3–4, Eliphaz intends to restore Job to his belief or worldview.

Principally, readers may confirm Eliphaz' intention by comparing his voice in 4:3–4 with Isa. 35:3–4. Isa. 35:3–4 commands, "strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong! Do not fear!'" By referring to Isa. 35:3–4, readers may read that Eliphaz' voice in 4:3–4 reveals that Job's act is identical to the act presented in Isa. 35:3–4. Readers can grasp the implication of Eliphaz' voice in 4:3–4 by examining the reason behind the commandment in Isa. 35:3–4.

The reason behind the prophetic commandment in Isa. 35:3–4 lies in the fact that God was with His people and God would come to His people with vengeance and terrible recompense (35:4). There was a presupposition behind the commandment which presumed that God is a faithful and powerful redeemer and creator who would renew His creation and restore His people.¹⁰⁶ By finding the presupposition behind the utterance, readers may find the answer as to why Eliphaz utters his speech in 4:3–4. "Eliphaz points out the message of salvation that Job had given to others."¹⁰⁷ God is the one in whom Job believed in the past. God is a faithful and powerful redeemer and creator who will renew and restore Job. In this way, although Eliphaz along with the other two friends, treated Job as someone who was already dead in the prologue, Eliphaz still holds on to the belief that God will restore and renew Job, because God is a faithful and powerful God.

Further, Eliphaz' utterance in 4:3–4 plays its role in contradicting Job's voice in chapter 3. In Eliphaz' voice, the content of the utterance seems to have originated from Eliphaz' memory of Job's past actions.¹⁰⁸ Eliphaz' recollection of Job's past is a memory of what Job did *per se* rather than of Job himself.¹⁰⁹ Eliphaz' identifying Job by remembering what he has done in the past objectifies Job, because according to Bakhtin, for Eliphaz who exists as an *other* to Job, Job exists entirely as an object.¹¹⁰ Since Job is perceived as an object by Eliphaz, Eliphaz fails to understand Job or to empathize with him.

¹⁰⁶ Pyeon, *You Have Not Spoken What Is Right about Me*, 112.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁰⁹ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, 140.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

God's and Hassatan's Voices and Eliphaz' Voice

God's voice and *hassatan's* voice echo in 4:2. In 4:2, Eliphaz begins his speech with a rhetorical question, "If one tested a word/matter with you, will you be weary/offended?" In the previous chapter of the book, we have already discussed the manner of this utterance as Eliphaz being cautious and assuaging, because Eliphaz did not want to add more words, which might bring more suffering to Job. In the utterance, Eliphaz displays his presupposition that Job has already gone through a severe test. Eliphaz' presupposition is well evinced in his speech in 5:17: "Behold! Happy is the one whom God reproves; therefore do not despise the discipline of the Almighty." According to 5:17, Eliphaz perceives Job's suffering as a God-given test that proves Job's sinfulness and God-given discipline to correct Job. Because of this presupposition, Eliphaz may be wary about his words/voice becoming another test to Job and making him weary.

In actuality, Eliphaz' voice in 4:2 and 5:17 recalls to readers the discussion between God and *hassatan* in the heavenly scene in 1:6–12 and 2:1–6. Particularly, readers may read *hassatan's* voice in Eliphaz' utterance in 4:2. In the heavenly scene in the prologue, God had a firm assurance of Job's piety, but *hassatan* raised a doubt concerning Job's piety and incited (תסיתני) God to ruin Job (2:3). Eventually, *hassatan's* incitement to God prompts God to make the decision to play a game to test Job.¹¹¹

So, *hassatan's* voice, echoing in Eliphaz' voice, helps readers to identify with Eliphaz' conception of Job. According to Eliphaz in chapter 4, human beings are sinners and since Job is a human being, he is also a sinner. Since Job is a sinner, death must come to Job.

Voices in the Prologue and Bildad's Voice

Like Job's voice and Eliphaz' voice, Bildad's voice also echoes voices in the prologue. Bildad's voice echoing other voices in the prologue may be understood by readers as Bildad's act of reading Job and his voice in the dialogue as being dependent on the voices in the prologue. How does Bildad echo the voices in the prologue?

First, with respect to the narrator's voice, Bildad implicitly presents his perception of the relationship between Job's character and his possessions

¹¹¹ Pyeon (*You Have Not Spoken What Is Right about Me*, 102) explains that what happened to Job in the prologue is a test.

described in 1:1–3. Although the narrator’s voice describing Job’s character as “blameless and upright” in 1:1 does not clearly designate a relationship with what he possessed or determine the existence of an act-consequence relationship between God and Job, it is clear in 8:6 and 20 that Bildad regards the relationship between God and Job as a retributive relationship. In 8:6 and 20, Bildad points out to Job that God will restore and redeem those who are pure, blameless and upright. According to Bildad, since God restores and redeems the blameless and upright, Job needs to return to his former blameless and upright self.

Bildad uses the death of Job’s children as evidence of God’s retributive justice. In 8:4, Bildad read Job’s children’s death as a result of their own iniquities. *Job* 1:5 presents Job’s voice exhibiting his anxiety over his children’s iniquities. Although Job was not certain whether or not his children had sinned, Job made burnt offerings to sanctify his children. *Job* 1:19 also presents the messenger’s voice reporting Job’s children’s death.

To readers, Bildad’s speech concerning Job’s children’s sin in 8:4 (אם-בניך חטאו לו וישלחם ביד פשעם) is a clear indication of Bildad’s belief that the utterances in *Job* 1:5 and 19 indeed confirm Job’s children’s sinfulness. Based upon this reading, by echoing Job’s voice concerning his children’s iniquities in 1:5 and the messenger’s voice pertaining to their death in 1:19, Bildad intends to deliver the message that Job’s suffering was caused by his sins and only by returning to his former piety will Job be restored and redeemed by God who does not pervert justice and righteousness (8:3).

Second, Bildad’s idea that Job’s suffering is an outcome of his sins may be strengthened by his use of the verb “to swallow” (בלע). In 8:11–18, Bildad warns Job of the fate of the wicked using the metaphor of a plant that is uprooted and annihilated. Particularly, in verse 18, Bildad uses the verb “swallow” (יבלענו) to indicate the climax of the fate of the wicked.¹¹² Bildad presents the image of the verb “swallow” (בלע) as God pulling the wicked up like a plant being uprooted, as Fohrer interprets in his commentary: “Gott reißt ihn wie eine Pflanze aus!”¹¹³

Bildad’s use of the verb “swallow” (בלע) as God’s act reminds readers of God’s voice in 2:3. In 2:3, God rebuked *hassatan*, because *hassatan* incited God to swallow/destroy (לבלעו) Job for no reason. According to God’s

¹¹² Clines (*Job* 1–20, 209) contends that 8:16–18 “comes to a climax with the devastation (בלע) of” verse 18.

¹¹³ Fohrer (*Das Buch Hiob*, 193) interprets 8:18 as Bildad’s warning about God’s act of the ‘pulling out’ of the wicked; Clines, *Job* 1–20, 209.

voice in 2:3, it is true that Job's suffering has come from God's act of swallowing/ruining/pulling up of Job. At this point, Bildad is correct in saying that the subject of the swallowing is God, but Bildad misread the act of God from the verb "swallow." In 2:3, God's act of swallowing was for no reason and had nothing to do with Job's level of piety. However, Bildad understood God's act of swallowing as a punishment for those who forget God (בן-ארחות כל-שכחי אל ותקות חנף תאבד: 8:13). According to Bildad, Job's suffering is God's act of swallowing Job because of his iniquity.

Consequently, Bildad's misreading of God's act of "swallowing" leads readers to see that what is at stake is not Job's reading of his suffering and God but rather Bildad's reading of Job's suffering and God,¹¹⁴ because Bildad's reading is different from readers' readings of the discussion between God and *hassatan* in the heavenly scenes and goes against Job's reading (cf. *Job* 42:7). At the same time, Bildad's accusation against Job's character reflects *hassatan*'s challenge against God's perception of Job in the prologue. As *hassatan* questioned and challenged God's interpretation of Job and Job's piety, Bildad also doubts Job's piety.¹¹⁵

Thus, Bildad's readings of the voices in the prologue are closely linked to his perception of Job in the image of him being already dead. Bildad's discernment of God in the act-consequence relationship or the retributive order of the world induces Bildad to conclude that Job's suffering is an outcome of Job's sin.

Voices in the Prologue and Zophar's Voice

Zophar starts his speech taking the same position as his other two friends. His perception of Job in the image of the already dead naturally causes him to read Job as one who has lost his purity and piety (11:4). Specifically Zophar read the reason behind Job's loss of purity and piety as being his limited wisdom and understanding (11:4–8). Further, Zophar explains that Job's limited wisdom and understanding have resulted from his inability to access God's hidden wisdom (11:7–9).

In 11:7–9, Zophar implies that Job cannot fathom the secrets of God, the limits of the Almighty, because it is beyond Job's reach: it is higher than heaven, deeper than Sheol, longer than the earth and broader than the sea. Zophar's metaphorical utterances concerning Job's inability to access

¹¹⁴ Pyeon, *You Have not Spoken What is Right about Me*, 153.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

God's hidden wisdom echo Job's chronotopic limitations in the narrator's voice in the prologue. In the narrator's voice, the temporal and spatial elements, which were "the day," "the days," "before God," "in each house," presented Job as a being who could not access the heavenly scene. All the events in the heavenly scene were hidden from Job.

Not only does Zophar define Job's ontological limits—he is not an omnipresent being—by echoing Job's chronotopic limitations in the prologue but he also presents Job's epistemological limits. Since Job finds himself restricted chronotopically, he cannot be omniscient. Job must depend on his messengers to find out about the tragic events that happened to his possessions and children (11:13–19).

Particularly, by mentioning that God knows and sees iniquity in 11:11, Zophar reminds readers of Job's utterance in 1:5: "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." By reading Job's utterance in 1:5 and Zophar's utterance in 11:11, readers may read Zophar's implication that Job is incapable of reading his children's hearts in order to know for sure whether or not they have sinned, but God is able to see the iniquities in their heart. God's wisdom is hidden from Job because of the ontological and epistemological limitations of his chronotope.

Zophar's reading of Job's incapacity to understand God's wisdom not only echoes Job's ignorance of the discussion between God and *hassatan* in the heavenly scene in the prologue but also implies Zophar's limited reading of God's and *hassatan*'s voices in the heavenly scene in the prologue, since Zophar along with the other two friends is presented in a specific time and particular space that are separate from God's time and space just as Job had been in the prologue.

Zophar's inability to know God's and *hassatan*'s voices in the prologue signals his inability to read Job, since according to the narrator in the prologue, Zophar came from his own place that was different from Job's (ממקמו: 2:11) and saw Job from a distance (מרחוק: 2:12) and could not recognize him¹¹⁶ (ולא הכירהו: 2:12). Zophar's failure to read Job is clearly confirmed by his speech in 11:13–15. In 11:13–15, Zophar suggests Job spread his hands to God and remove all evil from his hands and lift up his face without blemish. Zophar implies in his utterance that words are in vain and empty talk (11:3). Rather than using words, Zophar urges Job to use his body to regain his piety and restore his former status as blameless and

¹¹⁶ Please refer to chapter 2 of the book to see more discussion on the relationship between three friends' chronotope and their acknowledgment of Job.

pure. However, because of his failure to read Job correctly, Zophar's words prove to be inadequate for Job.

Zophar seems unable to read what Job has already done as introduced by the narrator in the prologue. The narrator comments in 1:21 that Job had already fallen on the ground and worshipped and had not sinned or charged God with wrongdoing. Zophar's suggestion in 11:13–15 becomes like empty talk to Job who had already worshipped God but was still suffering. Why does Zophar ignore Job's worship of God in the prologue? Or why does Zophar still mull over the significance of the act/motion of Job's physical body?

For Zophar, Job's physical body is important, since Job's body influences Zophar's perception of the image of Job in the chronotope of the dialogue.¹¹⁷ Job's body can easily be understood by Zophar as determining and finalizing Job.¹¹⁸ However, Job does not read his body as determining and finalizing,¹¹⁹ because his body is the centre of his actions,¹²⁰ and his actions do not say anything about Job himself only about his actions¹²¹ and with reference to the concept of body.¹²² Thus, Zophar's perception of Job in relation to Job's body is not Zophar's reading of Job himself but his reading of Job's actions or body-language. At this point, readers may grasp the different perspectives between Job and Zophar with reference to Job and his plight.

Conclusion

As a flower appears simple from the outside but hides various components on the inside, the prologue is perceived as a simple narrative form but hides different voices within it. Hidden voices have not been explicitly revealed in the prologue. The prologue projects only the prospect that hidden voices would be heard in future reading by presenting Job's *unfinalized* status and introducing Job's three friends and their surplus of seeing Job's death.

According to Bakhtin, as there is neither a first nor a last word but the past meanings of the words never die and are renewed in the future voices

¹¹⁷ Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, xxxiv.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, xxxiv.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹²² *Ibid.*, xxxiii.

and dialogue, words in the prologue bear other, renewed meanings in the voices in the dialogue section of *Job*.¹²³ By the explicit revelation of the meanings of hidden voices in the dialogue, the voices in the prologue are complemented.

Through his friends' surplus of seeing death, Job has observed what his three friends have not perceived in the dialogue. Job's voice in the dialogue provides renewed meanings to the voices in the prologue. Meanings renewed by Job in the dialogue cause readers to read that Job's reading has led him to *a* question closer to *the* question for the reason of his suffering and about death.

In the same way, after observing Job's death, Job's three friends provide their own voices to define Job as an unrighteous man in the dialogue. The three friends' definition of Job as an unrighteous man in response to Job's voice in the dialogue leads readers to hear voices echoing from the prologue. It is therefore unquestionably clear to readers that the three friends' utterances responding to Job's utterance have their basis in the utterances in the prologue. However, in the dialogue, Job's friends seem to have *a* question more distant from *the* question regarding Job's suffering and about death.

Therefore, although both Job and his three friends depend on the voices in the prologue for their utterances in the dialogue, Job's three friends' perception/readings are different from Job's perception/readings, because both Job and his three friends do not see the whole of Job and they define him in their own context according to their own interest in Job in the estranged chronotope.

When readers read different voices from Job and his three friends they may perceive different images of Job in *Job*. As different pieces in a puzzle join together to form a whole picture, when Job's different images from the characters' different voices come together/match up, readers may realize a more adequate and clear picture of Job as a man in *Job*. A sufficient, clear definition of what kind of man Job is may enable readers to read Job and *Job* with more clarity and to ask more clearly defined questions of Job and *Job*.

¹²³ Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 170.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION: UNFINALIZING JOB

Readers of the book may realize that the various voices in the prologue and the first cycle of *Job* create new meanings with respect to Job's characterization as a perfectly righteous man when they respond to one another. By creating new meanings, the voices generate more questions than answers regarding this characterization of Job. However, some readers may not have totally abandoned their expectation of hearing a voice or voices which will eventually finalize Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God, a shunner of evil in *Job*, for the book of *Job* has not yet ended. The remaining chapters of the book of *Job*, chapters 12 to 42, include more voices Job's, his three friends', Elihu's, and God's. Further, since *Job* ends in 42:17 by stating Job's death, some readers may assume that Job will have been finalized by a voice or voices by then.

This final chapter attempts to conclude or finalize the discussion on whether the various voices in the whole book of *Job* succeed in finalizing Job. First, the chapter briefly examines whether the voices in the second and third cycles of the dialogue between Job and his three friends finalize Job as a perfect man. In chapter 12, Job responds to his friends' speeches in the first cycle by uttering that his *nefesh* is still unfinalized and alive.¹ Job's response to his friends,

no doubt you are the people, and wisdom will die with you. But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know such things as these? (12:2–3),

implies that Job has not yet been finalized and Job's voice has more to say about him.

Also, Job's final lengthy speech in the third cycle begins with Job's assurance that his *nefesh* is still alive. Job's last speeches in chapter 27 commence with his response to his friends,

as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit.

¹ Webb, *Mark at the Threshold*, 20.

Going on this statement, readers may perceive that Job never once abandoned his *nefesh* in resisting his friends' finalizing words against him and continued to use his *nefesh* to finalize himself in the appropriate way. It is quite clear that the second and third cycles begin and end with Job's living *nefesh*. The mere fact that Job's *nefesh* is still alive indicates that Job has not been finalized.

Particularly, in the second and third cycles, the word "words" (מלין) plays a key function in the dialogic relationship between Job and his friends and in Job's unfinalizability. The word "words" (מלין) provides a place where Job and his friends create their individual finalizations of Job. The word "words" (מלין) indicates or implies the words with which Job tries to finalize himself as a perfect and righteous man and also the responses of Job's three friends to Job aimed at finalizing Job in their own ways. The three friends perceive Job's "words" (מלין) as unprofitable words (15:3), no good words (15:3), words against God (15:13), stupid words (18:2), and censuring words (20:3²). Eliphaz sees Job's words (מלין) as condemning Job and testifying to his being a sinner (15:5–6). To his friends, Job's words (מלין) serve no purpose in finalizing Job as a perfect man and rather fail in substantiating Job's righteousness.

However, Job's understanding of his words (מלין) is different. First, he believes his words sufficiently prove his innocence and righteousness (19:23–25; 24:25; 29:22), but his friends have misunderstood his words (12:11; 13:17). Second, Job perceives that not only have they misunderstood, but they have also used his words (מלין) to attack him. Job thinks that his friends have used his own words against him to torment him and crush his *nefesh* in order to stop him from speaking (19:2) and have used his words as a means to mock him (30:9).

The second and third cycles end with Job's final speeches from chapter 27 to chapter 31. The fact that the dialogues between Job and his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, end with long speeches by Job indicates that Job's three friends have failed to finalize Job. Job's speeches in 27–31 serve as the main cause for Job's friends' failure. Since Job's speeches in 27–31 highlight Job's unfinalizability or ambiguity, his three friends could not understand Job and had to stop their finalizing of Job. In particular, the relationship between chapters 27 and 29 and chapter 28 leaves his friends

² In Zophar's speech, 20:3 does not explicitly use the word "words" (מלין), but readers clearly perceive that Zophar's words in 20:3 are caused and provoked by Job's words (מלין).

and readers of *Job* puzzled. Job's speech in chapter 28³ plays its role in making his three friends and readers unable to finalize Job in *Job*.

In Joban scholarship, the question regarding the position of *Job* 28 and the relationship of *Job* 28 to the surrounding chapters has been complex and difficult to answer. *Job* 28 appears to have been inserted between *Job* 27 and 29, which are Job's utterances. Situated between *Job* 27 and 29, *Job* 28 perplexes Job's three friends and readers when it comes to making sense of their readings of the third cycle and Job's utterance from chapter 29 to 31. In their reading of *Job* 29–31, both Job's three friends and readers may discover the difference between Job's speech in 29–31 and Job's speeches in the first, second and third cycles of the dialogue as well as in chapter 27.⁴ *Job* 29–31 seems to have no addressees and a differing point of view from Job's utterances in the dialogue.

In this way, Job's ambiguity and unfinalizability in the relationship between chapters 27/29 and 28 cause Job's three friends to struggle and, unable to resolve the ambiguity of Job, they stop reading and finalizing Job (32:1, 3). Since Job's three friends' voices have stopped finalizing Job and only Job's finalizing voice is heard, is that an indication that Job has succeeded in finalizing himself as a perfectly righteous man? Rather than finalizing himself, Job's speeches instead prompt Elihu's responsive voice trying to finalize Job in *Job*.

Elihu's speech is a responsive utterance to Job's voice in chapters 27 to 31 due to the dialogic nature of a word, utterance and speech, and, in particular, to the relationship of chapter 28 to the chapters around it. Although Job's three friends failed to read/perceive the meanings of chapter 28 in relation to the chapters around it, Elihu did perceive Job's voice in chapters 27 to 29.

In *Job*, Elihu's speeches in chapters 32 to 37 clearly illustrate his role as a reader⁵ who hears/reads Job's speeches and his three friends' speeches in order to understand. Elihu was angry with Job's three friends because they could not find a way to respond to Job's voice, especially in 27 to 31. The

³ There are many debates and questions concerning who is responsible for the speech. For example, Clines understands that the speech is Elihu's (*Job 21–37: Word Biblical Commentary*, v. 18A. [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2006], 889–926). However, the book perceives a Bakhtinian perspective that chapter 28 belongs to Job in order to highlight Job's ambiguity.

⁴ Newsom, *The Book of Job*, 183.

⁵ Newsom ("Re-Considering Job," 167; *The Book of Job*, 200–4) presents Elihu as the "model reader" and "dissatisfied reader."

very fact that Elihu begins to speak after Job's puzzling speeches (chapters 27 to 29) indicates that he has understood Job's perplexing speeches.

Given that Elihu did respond, readers of *Job* may perceive that Elihu has made sense of Job's perplexing sayings in 27 to 31 in the following way. First, Elihu understands Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar to have perceived Job's speeches in chapters 27 to 29 to mean that Job's wisdom transcends their wisdom (32:13). This understanding is based on his perception of Job's speeches in 12:3, 12–25 in conjunction with chapters 27 to 29.

Elihu understands Job to have implied, in 12:3, that he knew as much as his friends and further, he had a deeper knowledge of God in 12:12–25. Particularly, in 12:13–25, Elihu perceives Job to have implied that, although Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar may possess good wisdom due to their age and experience, God could take away discernment and understanding from them (12:20, 24) because wisdom, counsel, and understanding belong to God (12:13) and God could grant it to whomsoever he wants to grant it or take it away from whomsoever he wants to take it away.

Elihu believes Job tried to finalize himself as one who had more wisdom than his three friends, since God had taken away discernment and understanding from them. Elihu confirms his understanding about Job's implication by hearing Job's voice in 27:11 and chapter 28. In 27:11, Job's statement "I will teach you concerning the hand of God; that which is with the Almighty I will not conceal." Per Job's understanding of the nature of wisdom in chapter 28, Elihu thinks that Job has become arrogant and believes his wisdom to be superior (33:17).

Actually, Elihu's perception of Job's understanding of wisdom provokes him to add his voice, understanding, and wisdom to Job and his three friends, even though he is young and they are old (32:4, 6), rather than to submit to Job's wisdom. Elihu understands that God would also grant wisdom to him and make him understand not because of age, but because of the nature of wisdom, as wisdom does not belong to the earthly realm (28:13) but rather to God (28:23), and he has been made by the spirit of God and received life from the breath of the Almighty (33:4). In this way, through Job's speeches, Elihu gleans that he would receive wisdom from God who is in him and through that wisdom, he could teach them (32:8–10).

Second, Elihu understands that Job adds his voice in chapter 28 to complement his voices in the surrounding chapters and to announce his righteousness. Elihu perceives that Job's voice in chapter 28 evinces Job's wisdom and knowledge in chapters 27 and 29–31. Eventually, Job's wisdom and knowledge prove his righteousness. According to Elihu's reading

of Job's voice in chapters 27 to 28, Job's instructive voice concerning God to his three friends begins in 27:11 and culminates in 28:28. In 27:11, Job begins to instruct his three friends concerning God's power and way and, in chapter 28, Job continues to teach his three friends the same. According to Elihu's understanding of Job's voice in chapter 28, Job's understanding of God's power and way acknowledges and proclaims that only God possesses unfinalizable and invaluable wisdom.

Also, by declaring the fear of the Lord to be wisdom and shunning evil to be understanding, Elihu believes that Job thinks his wisdom and understanding of God would evince his fear of God and shunning of evil.⁶ Job's fear of God and shunning of evil display his righteousness which is implied by Job's voice in chapter 31. As for Elihu, Job's speeches in chapters 27 to 31 proclaim that he is more righteous than God (32:2) and God is attacking him unjustly (33:9–11; 34:5–6).

However, Elihu's understanding leads him to finalize Job as a sinful, unwise and imperfect man before God. Elihu counter-attacks Job by using Job's words in chapters 27 to 31. As Job mentioned in 28:12–28 that God's wisdom could not be possessed, understood, or finalized by man, Elihu perceives God as one whom human beings cannot understand because God does not reveal the purpose or meaning of his actions (33:13–14). Since God does not allow human beings to know or understand his actions, how can human beings criticize or finalize God's actions? Thus, Job's complaint against God is completely unfounded.

Also, Elihu encourages Job to extol God instead of justifying his innocence and displaying wisdom since Job testifies to God's unfinalizable and invaluable wisdom in 28:12–28 (36:24). According to Elihu's reading, due to God's transcending knowledge and wisdom, human beings, including Job, need to praise him (36:24–26). In particular, Elihu corrects Job's futile attempt at finalizing God in 28:24–26. Elihu perceives Job's voice in 28:24–26 to be defining what God does with the wind, waters, rain, and thunderstorm. In Elihu's eyes, Job is trying to boast about his wisdom and knowledge. However, Elihu creates different meanings for the wind, waters, rain, and thunderstorm. According to 36:27–37:20 the wind, waters, rain, and thunderstorm must be understood as signaling God's

⁶ Readers of *Job* recall the narrator's voice in *Job* 1:1. At this point, readers may think that Job is trying to finalize himself as the perfect man whom the narrator had described in the prologue.

righteousness, wonders and greatness rather than Job's righteousness and wisdom.

Therefore, in response to Job's voice in 28:28: "God says to man that the fear of the Lord is wisdom and to turn away from evil is understanding," Elihu concludes his speeches by warning Job not to consider himself as righteous and wise but to humble himself before God due to His greatness and righteousness. However, Elihu responds to the voice by implying that, although Job thinks that he is wise because of his fear of God, he needs to consider himself as unwise in his heart because God does not have any regard for those who consider themselves wise (37:24).

Following Elihu's voice, the divine voice from chapters 38 to 41 makes readers of *Job* glean different meanings from Elihu's voice. Elihu's voice is actually not much different from that of Job's three friends. If we were to simplify Elihu's voice, his voice defines Job as unrighteous and unwise and needing to repent his sins before God. In concluding his words in 37:24, Elihu appears to have succeeded in finalizing Job in *Job*.

However, the divine voice is a very ambiguous one. It contradicts Elihu's voice which finalizes Job as unrighteous. First, the divine speech speaks of somebody's ignorance concerning creation, but the addressee of the divine speech is unclear. Some readers may easily assume that the addressee of the divine speech is Job and God's speech is rebuking Job for his ignorance of the complexities of God's act of creation. Chapter 38:1 reports that the Lord answered Job and, due to their readings of Job's voice in 3:4, 5, and 9, readers may see Job as the one who darkens counsel.

However, other readers may consider it prudent to devise a different way to read the divine speech due to the ambiguities in it. If the divine speech in chapter 38 concerns Job's ignorance about creation, why does the Lord repeat the rhetorical question to pinpoint Job's ignorance about creation, since Elihu had already asked similar rhetorical questions concerning Job's ignorance about creation in the previous chapter (37:15–18)? Additionally, if God is addressing his speech to Job in chapters 38 and 39, why does he repeat the exact same sentences from 38:3 in 40:7: "Gird up your loins like a man; I will question you, and you declare to me?" One may posit that God repeats the same phrase in two verses to catch Job's attention. However, others may read that the addressees of the first divine voice in chapters 38 and 39 and the second divine speech in chapters 40 and 41 are different. It could be that the Lord repeats the same phrase in both divine speeches to grab the attention of his different addressees.

However, the hermeneutics of suspicion with respect to the narrator's authority may suggest an alternative reading on the issue of the addressee

of the first divine speech. The voice in 38:1 is the narrator's voice. The narrator announces that the Lord is answering Job. As the book discussed in chapter 2, however, does the narrator have the authority to finalize readers' readings of chapter 38 and to disclose the addressee of the first divine speech? While readers may traditionally perceive the addressee of the divine speech in chapter 38 to be Job, it is equally as feasible to read the addressee as someone other than Job. Thus, an alternative reading, positing the addressee of the first divine speech in chapters 38 and 39 as Elihu and the addressee of the second divine speech in chapters 40 and 41 as Job, is plausible.

In the first speech, the Lord intends to respond to Elihu's speech in 36:24–37:24. Elihu's speech in 36:24–37:24 is a responsive voice to Job's voice in 28:12–28. In the responsive voice, Elihu intends to correct Job's knowledge about God's creation. By correcting Job's limited knowledge about creation, Elihu is implying that his knowledge concerning creation is superior to Job's. In the first speech, the divine voice refutes Elihu's attack (37:14–23) on Job's knowledge/wisdom of/on creation (28:21–27) by using rhetorical questions. The basis of God's refutation of Elihu's attack on Job's knowledge/wisdom concerning creation is the limited nature of human knowledge/wisdom.

Although Elihu intends to correct Job's knowledge/wisdom regarding creation in 3:2–9 and 28:12–28 with his own knowledge/wisdom concerning creation in 36:24–37:24, the Lord responds to Elihu by implying that Elihu possesses knowledge/wisdom as limited as Job's due to his human nature. In 33:4 and 6, Elihu distinctly states that the spirit of God created him from a piece of clay like Job. This statement portrays Elihu as a human being who possesses limited knowledge and wisdom. The Lord intends to remind Elihu of the things he said to Job, make him acknowledge his own limited knowledge/wisdom, and prevent Elihu's voice from finalizing Job as unrighteous.

Not only does the Lord remind Elihu of his limited knowledge/wisdom, but also the divine speech seems to make its readers acknowledge the limitations of their own knowledge. Ultimately, the implication of the divine speech is to provoke Elihu, Job, other addressees and readers to recognize their own limitations, the limited knowledge of characters' voices and readers' readings of the voices, which reminds readers of *Job* of Job's unfinalizability.

Second, the divine speech is vague in its relationship to Job's voice. How do readers understand the divine speeches in relation to Job's voice in *Job*? As readers read, the divine speech does not seem to answer Job's

questions from the previous chapters. Job appears to be asking questions concerning his unreasonable suffering. However, instead of responding to Job's questions, the divine speech keeps challenging Job with the Lord's creation and His knowledge/wisdom concerning various creatures.

Actually, the intention of the divine speech is not to provide an answer or explanation for Job's sufferings but to fulfill what Job has sought and tried to establish. To expand on this concept further, I wish suggest a connection between Job's first speech in *Job* 3 and the divine speech. In chapter 3 of the present book, I have argued that Job's cursing his birthday implied the restoration or re-creation of his life by reversing the creative order: light-Job's word-dark, since Job's de-creative order from light to dark proleptically begins another creative order that began with darkness: God created the world in/from darkness (Gen. 1:2).

God starts His words with the word "dark" (דָּח) in 38:2, so He appears to pick up from what Job started to do in *Job* 3. By beginning with the word "dark" (דָּח) the divine speech may be read metaphorically as a creative utterance/voice. The divine speech follows the order from cosmic elements to animals on the earth just as He created heaven and earth in Genesis 1. Therefore, the divine speech seems to pick up where Job left off in *Job* 3 and take the path Job expected in *Job* 3. In *Job* 3, Job curses his birthday to de-create his life from life to death or light to dark. On the other hand, the divine speech re-creates Job's life as Job expected and desired in his speeches in the dialogue by taking the creative order: dark to light and cosmos to animals/living creatures.

Since the divine speech fulfilled what Job had sought and tried to establish, readers may question whether the divine speech has succeeded in finalizing Job as a perfect man. The Lord adds His voice to finalize Job, since the Lord was not satisfied with Elihu's speech. So, has the divine speech succeeded in finalizing Job? To find the answer, readers need to read Job's response to the divine speech in chapter 2 of the present book, since God's speech has been categorized as an utterance, which includes a dialogic element rather than being an authoritative, absolute, privileged or finalized discourse.⁷

Job responds to the divine speech in two places: the first place is 40:4–5 and the second is 42:1–6. First, Job's voice in 40:4–5 is a responsive speech to the divine speech to Elihu (or Job?) in 38:1–39:30 and to Job in 40:2b "He who arraigns God must respond." By responding to the divine speech, Job, in 40:4–5, contests that the divine speech fails to finalize him. In 40:4,

⁷ See 50. Cf. Webb, *Mark at the Threshold*, 19.

Job states, "See, I am of small worth; what can I answer you?" Job has already spoken of his small (קָלִל) worth in chapter 3. In 3:1, the narrator mentions that Job opened his mouth to make his day small/light (קָלִל). In 40:4, Job seems to say, "See, Lord! I have already mentioned to you how small or unworthy I am previously. What do you want to hear from me?"⁸ Further, Job implicitly responds to the Lord,

Look, Lord. I have already said what I needed to say, so, I do not want to say any more unless you do what I asked you to do.⁹

As Clines states in his commentary, Job

does not withdraw a word he has said, he does not abandon his case, he does not admit that God is in the right or that he is in the wrong, he does not confess his sins or apologize for what he has said. He only announces that he will not reiterate his case. And that means that his words remain spoken, his criticism of God is still in force, his sense of injustice is as great as ever . . .¹⁰

Second, after the divine voice finishes its second speech in 41:34, Job responds to the speech in 42:1–6. In 42:1–6, Job does not seem to be finalized at all. The divine speech in chapters 40 to 41 functions to provide Job with knowledge concerning God's power but does not resolve Job's problems. Job still has a question to ask and implies that God still has information to tell him (42:4). The fact that Job has a question to ask and is seeking additional information from God indicates that he is not yet finalized. His *nefesh* is still alive.

Job's last word in 42:6 further reinforces the idea that Job has not been finalized by the divine speech. 42:6 is a very ambiguous speech. As Charles Muenchow states in his article concerning this verse,

Indeed, so inextricably woven into the very fabric of Job 42:6 are its philological difficulties that the author of the study just mentioned is led to hypothesize that this verse's ambiguities are intentionally crafted into it.¹¹

The verse is an example of Job's ambiguous voice. Muenchow provides possible interpretations of the verse: 1) "Wherefore I retract (or I submit) and I repent on (or on account of) dust and ashes." 2) "Wherefore I

⁸ This is my own reading.

⁹ This is also my own reading.

¹⁰ Clines, *Job 38–42: WBC* vol. 18B. (Nashville, Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 1139.

¹¹ Charles Muenchow, "Dust and Dirt in Job 42:6." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108/4 (1989): 598.

reject it (implied object in v. 5), and I am consoled for dust and ashes.”
3) “Wherefore I reject and forswear dust and ashes.”¹²

In this way, Job’s ambiguous response to the divine speech does not help readers to ascertain whether the divine speech has succeeded in finalizing Job as a perfect man. If Job’s voice in 42:6 conveys the idea that Job perceived his sinfulness through the divine speech and decided to repent his sins, the divine speech, as well as other voices in *Job*, has succeeded in finalizing Job as unrighteous. At the same time, Job would have finalized himself as a righteous man because he had repented to become righteous following the suggestion of his friends.

On the other hand, if Job’s voice in 42:6 is indicative of Job’s dissatisfaction with the divine speech and he is still seeking an explanation for his unreasonable sufferings since he is innocent, the divine speech, as well as the other friends’ voices, has clearly failed to finalize Job. Job’s voice in 42:1–6 implies that neither the divine speech nor his three friends’ speeches nor Elihu’s speech has finalized Job in *Job*. Though Job attempts to finalize himself as a righteous or perfect man, his voices in 40:4–5 and 42:2–6 are still not clear enough to demonstrate that Job has succeeded in finalizing himself.

Various voices exit from the poetic section without any success in finalizing Job and become silent.¹³ Upon entering the epilogue, the narrator introduces the Lord’s voice immediately after Job’s response to the second divine speech in 42:2–6. The divine voice/the Lord’s voice speaks to Eliphaz the Temanite. The divine voice seems to be restoring Job to his original situation to his king-priest-like position¹⁴ in the prologue. God/the Lord requires Eliphaz and his two friends to take seven bulls and seven rams and go to Job to sacrifice burnt offerings for themselves. This requirement reminds readers of Job’s king-priest-like fatherly portrayal in the prologue. Job sacrificed burnt offerings for his children when a round of feast days by his children was over in Job 1:5. By restoring Job to his original position as in the prologue, does the divine speech in the epilogue finalize Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God, and a shunner of evil? Is the narrator trying to define the meanings of blameless, upright, a fearer of God, and a

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Clines (*Job* 38–42, 1230) announces, “By the time we have reached the end of Job’s second response (42:6), we readers may well feel, with Job, that nothing has been resolved, and that his cry for just treatment has gone unanswered.”

¹⁴ See 44.

shunner of evil to finalize Job in the epilogue? To answer these questions, readers may need to understand the nature of the epilogue.

The epilogue is completely and utterly different from the prologue. Since the epilogue is the same genre as the prologue, readers have a tendency to read the epilogue in the same way as the prologue, hearing the same voices in the prologue in the epilogue. However, the present book leads readers to expect that the prologue and epilogue display different voices and chronotopes. Obviously, the temporal indicators in the two prose tales are different: the prologue begins with the temporal indicator “the days” (הַיָּמִים). The epilogue ends with the temporal indicator “days” (יָמִים). The two different temporal indicators may signal different chronotopes; different chronotopes form different stories. So, it is worth examining the voices in the prologue and epilogue to see how the voices and stories in the prologue and epilogue differ.

First, as aforementioned, the Lord’s voice seems to be restoring Job as a king-priest-like person. However, readers of *Job* may acknowledge that the voices of the narrator in Job 1:1–5 and 42:7–10 are different. In Job 1:5, the subject¹⁵ of sacrificing burnt offerings is Job himself. Job is the one who provides sacrificial animals and makes burnt offerings for his children in the prologue. However, in 42:7–10, the subjects¹⁶ of sacrificial burnt offerings are Eliphaz and his two friends. Eliphaz and his two friends are the ones who bring bulls and rams to make sacrifices for themselves. In the epilogue, Job is portrayed as one who prays for them. These differences lead readers to question and doubt Job’s restoration to his original position and situation. Their skepticism causes them to view Job as unfinalizable.

Second, the narrator describes Job’s possessions in 42:12. The number of his possessions in the epilogue differs vastly from their number in the prologue. His possessions in the epilogue are double those in the prologue. Readers may perceive the doubled figure in the epilogue as an indicator of God’s/the Lord’s admission of his wrong doing, for the doubling could be misconstrued as God/the Lord compensating Job for his loss, according to the rule in Exodus 22:4.¹⁷

¹⁵ In Job 1:5, the verb ‘to bring up/offer’ (עָלָה) is 3 person singular, which indicates Job.

¹⁶ In Job 42:8, the verb ‘to bring up/offer’ (עָלָה) is 2 person masculine plural, which indicates Eliphaz and his two friends. Eliphaz the Temanite is the direct addressee of the Lord’s speech and his two friends are included in the divine speech.

¹⁷ Clines, *Job* 38–42, 1237.

If readers have indeed read the doubling of Job's possessions in 42:12 in this way, how would they be able to explain the unchanged number of his children? The number of his children has remained the same: seven sons and three daughters. Then, has Job really been compensated, comforted, and restored in the epilogue? The only real compensation and comfort that could be given to Job would be if the ten children who had died in the prologue had come back to life and Job had had seven more sons and three more daughters. However, the epilogue does not mention the seven sons and three daughters who died in the prologue at all.

Third, the epilogue does not allow readers to hear Job's, Job's wife's, God's, and *hassatan's* voices. Readers hear and read God's, *hassatan's*, Job's, and Job's wife's voices in the prologue. Even though the epilogue introduces God's/the Lord's voice at the beginning, it does not allow God/the Lord to talk about Job. Readers are uncertain as to whether God/the Lord still evaluates Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God, and a shunner of evil as He did in the prologue.

Also, Job is completely silent in the epilogue. Readers cannot perceive how Job responds to his brothers, sisters, and former friends' comfort (42:11), the Lord's blessing and doubling of his possessions (42:12), and his ten children (42:13–14). In the prologue, the narrator gave Job's responses to the sufferings in 1:21 and 2:10. Also, readers do not hear Job's wife's voice or *hassatan's* voice. In this way, the epilogue ends the book of Job with a much different world. The description of the differences in Job's world in the epilogue from his world in the prologue presents more ambiguities rather than a clear and straightforward reading to readers.¹⁸

Lastly, the epilogue reports Job's death. Job's *nefesh* ends. Does the culmination of Job's *nefesh* mean that Job is at last finalized? As Abigail Pelham clearly states:

Moreover, if Newsom is right that the epilogue extends the book's conversation out beyond the end of the book, the epilogue cannot be understood to provide us with all the information we need to understand what Job may have said after its incursion into the book. The epilogue may end with Job's death, but this is, in some ways, immaterial. The epilogue may tell us that, in the end, "Job died, old and full of days" (42:17), but, really, it is impossible for Job to die, if dying means the end of his ability to speak. As a textual character, engaged in an unfinished and 'unfinalizable' conversation, Job must continue speaking. "Job died. The end," proclaims the epilogue, but

¹⁸ Abigail Pelham, *Contested Creations in the Book of Job: The-World-as-It-Ought-and-Ought-Not-to-Be*. (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 37.

this is something the epilogue has no authority to proclaim or enforce. Job's 'life' is not bounded by the boundaries of the epilogue, if the epilogue's main purpose is to create an 'unfinalizable' text.¹⁹

Job is unfinalizable as long as readers of *Job* read, communicate, and dialogue with him. At the same time, as long as Job is unfinalizable, the text dialoguing with readers is unfinalizable.

Conclusion

In this book, I have argued that the various voices in *Job* 1–11 play significant roles in finalizing or unfinalizing Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil in *Job*. By means of Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and chronotope, I have characterized each voice as a distinct and unique utterance in *Job* 1–11, according to Bakhtin's approach, which assists readers to read each individual voice as an equally weighted one and to clarify the function of each voice. Consequently, first, I have demonstrated that readers' readings of an individual voice in the prologue through the lenses of dialogism and chronotope produce the perception that the voices in the prologue reveal each character's unfinalization, destabilization and ambiguity, which make the meaning of each character's speech undecidable,²⁰ with regard to the characterization of Job as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil.

Second, I have argued that every destabilized and unfinalized portrayal of Job in each character's speech in the prologue provokes readers' longing to hear voices that can provide finalized and stabilized utterances that propose Job as a completely perfect man. The beginning of *Job* 3 introduces dialogue with other voices, those of Job and his three friends. In scrutinizing this dialogue between Job's voice and his three friends' voices, I have enunciated the dialogic interrelationship between those voices. I have argued that the voices in the dialogue are responsive voices not only to one another within the dialogue but also to the voices in the prologue and that the voices in the dialogue echo the voices in the prologue.

As a result of discovering the dialogic and responsive nature of the voices in the dialogue, I have contended that these voices encourage readers to recognize that the voices in the prologue are complemented by and echo in the voices in the dialogue. At the same time, the voices in the dialogue

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Newsom, "Re-Considering Job," 159.

creatively discover and create new meanings because they echo the voices in the prologue. In this way, the voices in *Job* 1–11, creatively discovering and creating new meanings and provoking responses from characters in *Job*, fail to quench readers' desires to hear finalized and stabilized utterances that propose Job as a completely perfect man.

My reading of Job with Bakhtin's dialogism and chronotope has taken in the unique and different genres, themes, perspectives and voices in *Job*. By thoroughly investigating each unique voice in the prologue and in the first cycle of the dialogue and briefly connecting *Job* 1–11 with voices in the second and third cycles, chapter 28, Elihu's speech, the divine speech, and the epilogue, readers will acknowledge that *Job* is like a gigantic complex puzzle. There are thousands of pieces that make up the puzzle, with each individual piece having its own unique shape. No two pieces are alike. However, as each unique piece connects to another, soon the pieces all come together to form the whole picture. In this way, each voice in *Job* is unique and different from the others, but when readers place and read each voice together in Bakhtin's dialogic sense, readers may see how each voice dialogically responds to every other to form the whole story regarding Job as our hero.²¹ Furthermore, due to the dialogic nature of a word, an utterance and a speech in voice, whenever readers read new voices participate in the dialogic interaction and produce new and different meanings to unfinalize *Job*. Due to readers' active participation in the dialogic relationship between the various voices in *Job*, *Job* will continue to survive in readers' readings and vice versa.

²¹ Bakhtin's unfinalizability of dialogues does not reject the notion of 'wholes.' Caryl Emerson (*The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997], 220–21) argues that, for Bakhtin, "the whole of something can only be seen from a position that is outside of it in space and after it in time" (quoted in Claassens, "Biblical Theology as Dialogue," 133). According to Emerson's argument, Bakhtin's dialogic idea places readers in a position in which they grasp a sense of wholeness, which is bestowed by various dialogic voices in *Job* 1–11.

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